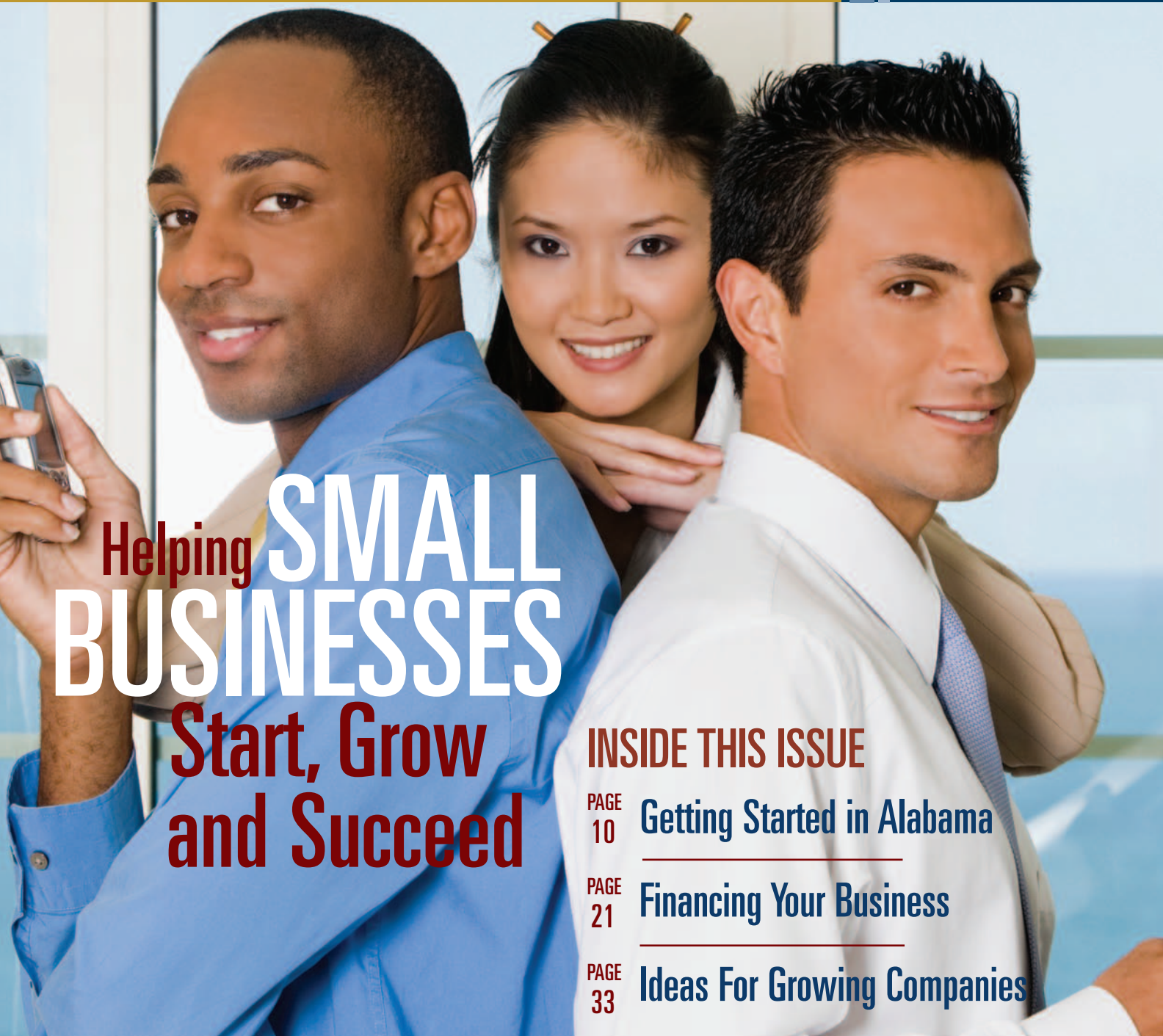


SBA SMALL BUSINESS

RESOURCE

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

ALABAMA



Helping **SMALL**
BUSINESSES
Start, Grow
and Succeed

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“Everything you need to know about setting up, marketing and managing the revenue of your business.”

Preparing 3,000 lunches
every day is tough.

BUT FINDING THE RIGHT HEALTH INSURANCE
WAS A PIECE OF CAKE.

Running Campus Dining at Samford University makes the daily lives of Ken Daniel and Charlie Carmon a little crazy. Fortunately, Blue Cross Blue Shield helps them restore a little sanity.



When Ken and Charlie let their employees choose a health insurance company, the unanimous choice was Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama. That decision has given them a great business partner, helped them attract good employees and made things a lot easier for their hectic

business. Ken says, "When your insurance company can walk the talk, you know your employees are covered. If they go to the doctor, they just have to show their Blue Cross card, and they've got absolutely nothing to worry about." Well, at least until the next lunch rush, that is.

From the Administrator



Steven C. Preston
SBA Administrator

Several American business icons—Apple Computer, Ben & Jerry's, Staples, Intel, Nike and Federal Express to name a few—got their start with assistance from the U.S. Small Business Administration. These companies took advantage of SBA's many resources—business counseling, loan guaranties, information about federal procurement opportunities—and took their great ideas into the marketplace. The rest is history.

The SBA's **Small Business Resource Guide** is another great tool for those working to create a successful company. In its pages you'll find detailed information on SBA's varied assistance programs for small businesses.

Last year the agency made tremendous progress in helping business owners. More than 1.5 million entrepreneurs received business counseling and technical assistance from the SBA, and the agency Web site received 26 million hits. The agency currently guarantees more than \$78 billion in loans and investments. In 2005 the SBA helped small businesses secure almost \$80 billion in prime contracts from government agencies. Meanwhile, we have more than 14,000 counselors from our Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers and SCORE available to small business owners or those trying to start a business.

Such resources are invaluable to small business and are often the gateway to other SBA offerings. This **Resource Guide** serves as a link to the SBA's expanding support network, providing important information about starting and growing a successful business.

President Bush recently said that when people "across the world look at America's economy what they see is low inflation, low unemployment and the fastest growth of any major industrialized nation. The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in the United States."

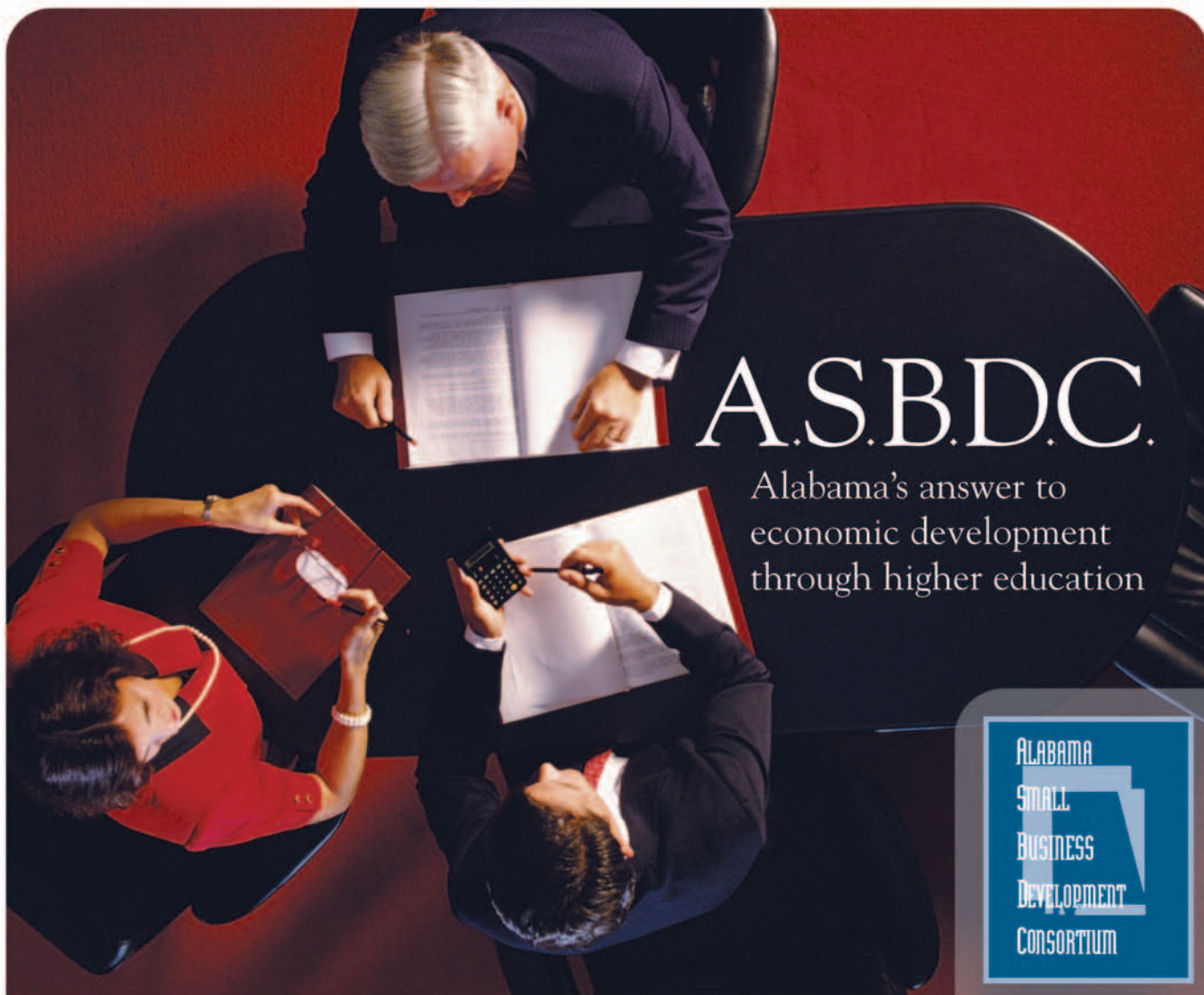
America's economy will continue to depend on the ingenuity and energy of its small business owners. There will be many partners in support of this effort, and SBA is ready to do its part.

The SBA team has worked hard to ensure the information presented in this **Resource Guide** is useful in the starting and growing of your small business. We hope you will seek assistance and advice at one of our many offices nationwide, via the Internet at www.sba.gov or through our extensive network of resource partners.

Steve Preston was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate June 29, 2006, as the 22nd Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration. With almost 25 years of experience in financial and operational leadership positions, Preston is committed to serving the small business community.

In his business experience as an executive and as an investment banker, Preston has been deeply involved in small businesses and recognizes the vital role they play in society. Preston most recently served as Executive Vice President of The ServiceMaster Company, where he also served as chief financial officer during a period of expansion, restructuring and significant change in the regulatory environment. He worked extensively on initiatives to improve the customer experience and employee effectiveness through the use of process reengineering and technology.

Preston graduated with Highest Distinction from Northwestern University with a political science degree, and received an MBA from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business.



► BUSINESS COUNSELING

- Business Plans
- Cash Flow Analysis
- Starting a Business
- Loan Package Assistance
- Training Workshops

► GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

- Registrations
- Bid Information Delivery
- Proposal Assistance
- Procurement Workshops & Conferences

► INTERNATIONAL TRADE

- Importing/Exporting
- Foreign Business Information
- International Standards

ALABAMA SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM

Contact us today at www.asbdc.org to find the Small Business Development Center near you.

ALABAMA

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Message From The District Director

Rules For Success

Like today's small businesses, large corporate success stories started with only an entrepreneur and a dream.

Welcome to the eighth (2006) edition of the Alabama Small Business Resource Guide. This guide has been a tremendous tool in helping reach so many small business entrepreneurs in Alabama.

Owning a business is a lifetime dream for many people. Owning your own business can be very rewarding but requires long hours of hard work, dedication and sacrifice. We, at SBA, want to encourage you to pursue this dream.

SBA's programs and services can assist you with every aspect of starting and growing your business. This Guide provides important information and lists resources that will help you succeed in business. As you develop your business, I hope you will take advantage of the many free programs and services. You can

also take advantage of those offered by SBA resource partners, SCORE, the Small Business Development Center network (SBDC), the Women's Business Centers, SBA lenders, and your local economic development agencies.

To learn more about the SBA visit our website at www.sba.gov. If you need additional assistance please call, visit our office or log on to our local website at www.sba.gov/al.

Good luck in your business endeavors.

Sincerely,

Michael Ricks

*District Director of
SBA's Alabama District Office*



Message From the Executive Director of Women's Business Center of North Alabama

The Women's Business Center of North Alabama (WBCNA) is located in Huntsville and serves seven counties in North Alabama. Our partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration has enabled us to help hundreds of entrepreneurs in North Alabama to start or grow a business. Our mission is to help women, and men, achieve their greatest potential and generate economic growth for the region. We do this by providing counseling, training, mentoring, access to financing, and a ready-made network of contacts to current and prospective small business owners. These services are proven to improve their likelihood of success, which in creates jobs and wealth for their communities.

One of the most valuable services we provide is technical assistance for the new SBA Community Express Loan Program. This program was designed specifically for start-ups and early stage small businesses that are unable to receive funds from traditional lenders. As of January 2007, the WBCNA has helped numerous business owners receive more than \$1,000,000 in business loans. Since lack of sufficient funding is one of the top reasons most small business-

es fail, we believe this loan program will be instrumental in increasing the number of successful businesses in Alabama. We applaud the SBA for developing this loan program and including technical assistance as a mandatory component of the program. The demand for these funds is an affirmation that it is much needed in the state.

If you live in North Alabama, please don't hesitate to call the WBCNA at (256) 213-2727 or visit our website at www.wbcna.org. We wish you much success with your business venture!

Sincerely,

Joanne W. Randolph

*Executive Director of the Women's Business Center
of North Alabama (WBCNA)*

■ The SBA helps business owners grow and expand their businesses every day.



SUCCESS STORY

Women's Business
Center of North
Alabama

Joanne W. Randolph,
Executive Director WBCNA

Ms. Randolph helped launch the WBCNE in 2000 and serviced as its first Board President. She was selected as part-time executive director in October 2005, with the primary responsibility of mentoring and counseling clients. In October 2006, WBCNA was proud to hire Ms. Randolph as the full-time Executive Director. It is her passion and energy with each and every client that sets the Center apart from any other. Ms. Randolph's expertise, derived from many years as an advocate for entrepreneurs and small business owners, has been invaluable in directing and strengthening the work of the Women's Business Center of North Alabama.

In her role at WBCFNW, Ms. Randolph has been instrumental in arranging local loan fairs and providing training to clients about borrowing money. She was invited by the Northeast Alabama Regional Small Business Development Center to lead their regularly-scheduled workshop entitled "Financing your Business." She went above and beyond just giving information, she could provide first-hand experience and insights because of her involvement with small businesses over the years.

Ms. Randolph works hard to build community awareness of the entrepreneurial spirit. Her interaction with the local media keeps the community abreast of the accomplishments of our women-owned business clients.

We Welcome Your Questions

For extra copies of this publication or questions please contact:

Alabama District Office
801 Tom Martin Drive, Suite 201
Birmingham, AL 35211

Tel.: (205) 290-7101 Fax: (205) 290-7404

Website: www.sba.gov/al



Doing Business in Alabama

THE ALABAMA DISTRICT OFFICE

The Alabama District Office is responsible for the delivery of SBA's many programs and services. The District Director is Michael Ricks. The District Office is located at 801 Tom Martin Drive, Suite 201, Birmingham, AL 35211. Office hours are from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

CONTACTING THE ALABAMA DISTRICT OFFICE

For program and service information, please contact the Alabama District Office at (205) 290-7101. For information on financing, please contact L.D. Ralph at extension 237. For information on government contracting, contact Susan Baxter at extension 228.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Financial assistance for new or existing businesses through guaranteed loans made by area bank and non-bank lenders.

Free counseling, advice and information on starting, better operating or expanding a small business through the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and Women's Business Centers (WBC). They also conduct training events throughout the district - some require a nominal registration fee.

Assistance to businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals through the Business Development Program.

A Women's Business Ownership Representative is available to assist women business owners. For more information go to the website: www.cawbc.org or www.onlinewbc.org.

Special loan programs are available for businesses involved in international trade.



Message From the State Director of the Alabama Small Business Development Corporation



The Alabama Small Business Development Consortium is proud to be a partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration. The ASBDC provides management and technical assistance, counseling and training to current and prospective small business owners. Administered by the SBA, our program is a cooperative effort of the educational community, private sector, and federal and state government. The ASBDC provides business assistance services through a network of 11 Small Business Development Centers and includes the Alabama International Trade Center that specializes in international trade assistance.

The Alabama SBA Resource Guide is an invaluable tool for entrepreneurs. Virtually every major source of assistance and contact point for businesses is contained in the Guide. Business owners seeking additional information may want to review the ASBDC's Guide to Doing Business in Alabama that is available online at www.asbdc.org.

If you are seeking business assistance in starting or operating your business, the SBA and the Small Business Development Centers can provide a wide variety of services. Please give us a call.

Sincerely,

William Campbell Jr.

State Director of the Alabama
Small Business Development Corporation



Message From the Executive Director of Central Alabama Women's Business Center



The Central Alabama Women's Business Center is located in Birmingham and is a partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration. Our focus is to help small businesses attain their full potential. We work with start up or existing businesses to empower them through one-on-one coaching and developing their skills via training programs. In addition, we provide financial and lending expertise and assistance.

Our primary service areas are the seven central counties of Alabama (Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Walker, Tuscaloosa, Blount and Talladega) surrounding Birmingham. Our Center has been assisting entrepreneurs in this service area for over 5 years.

Remember, both aspiring and existing entrepreneurs, business success has a greater chance of occurring when you have PASSION for what you do, have a PLAN of action, can PERSEVERE over the hurdles, and finally have PATIENCE for the outcomes. Please contact us or visit our website at www.cawbc.org.

Sincerely,

Edith Ingram

Project Director of the
Central Alabama Women's Business Center
205.453.0249
info@cawbc.org
www.cawbc.org



Message From the District Director of the SCORE



SCORE is proud to be a part of the Alabama Resource Guide. This Guide contains numerous resources that can be of assistance to small business entrepreneurs. With the assistance of this Guide you should be able to locate invaluable assistance and services in your local area.

SCORE is sponsored by the Small Business Administration and has chapters throughout Alabama. A new Chapter recently opened in Huntsville which covers northeast Alabama. SCORE chapters in Alabama have provided assistance to 5,321 business owners in Fiscal Year 2004.

SCORE offers FREE and CONFIDENTIAL counseling to small business owners whether they are starting or trying to grow.

As "Counselors to America's Small Business," SCORE can give both practical and technical guidance wherever and whenever it is needed.

Please feel free to contact the SCORE chapter nearest you for assistance. A list of our chapters can be found in this Guide.

To learn more about SCORE visit our website at www.score.org. If you need additional assistance please call or visit our office.

Good luck in your business endeavors.

Sincerely,

Marc Miller

District Director of the SCORE



Message From the Director of the Women's Business Center of Southern Alabama



The Women's Business Center of Southern Alabama (WBCSAL) is a project of the U. S. Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership. The WBCSAL offers programs and services on a non-discriminatory basis for women (and men) of all socio-economic levels who are in business or who desire to go into business. By offering confidential counseling, business training, mentoring, networking and access to the Internet, the WBCSAL seeks to improve the economic situation of women, primarily through promoting entrepreneurship.

As the growth of women-owned firms continues to outpace overall business growth, the WBCSAL continues to provide and expand our economic development programs and services to current and potential small business owners.

We are dedicated and committed to the success of the individuals who come through our doors, whether they become business owners or simply become better business people.

The Alabama SBA Resource Guide is a valuable tool for business success and the WBCSAL is pleased to be a part of it. If WBCSAL can assist you with your business goals or you have any questions about our programs or services, please contact us or see our website www.wbac-inc.org or www.onlinewbc.gov.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Browder

Director of the
Women's Business Center of Southern Alabama

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INTRODUCTION

Getting Started

How The SBA Can Help You Start
And Expand Your Own Business

Every day the U.S. Small Business Administration and its nationwide network of resource partners help millions of potential and current small business owners start, grow and succeed.

Whether your target market is global or just your neighborhood, the U.S. Small Business Administration and its partners can help at every stage of turning your entrepreneurial dream into a thriving new business.

If you're just starting, the SBA and its resources can help you with loans and business management skills. If you're already in business, you can use the SBA's resources to help manage and expand your business, obtain government contracts, recover from disaster, and have your voice heard in the federal government.

You can access SBA help online 24 hours a day at www.sba.gov or visit one of our local offices for assistance. SBA resources can help organize your thoughts on what type of business you want to open.

How to Use the Resource

Our resources include the SBA's district offices serving every state and territory, nearly 400 offices of SCORE – Counselors to America's Small Businesses, more than 1,000 Small Business Development Centers primarily located on college campuses, and approximately 100 Women's Business Centers located across the country. More information about SCORE, SBDCs and the WBCs is detailed later in this publication, or you can click on www.score.org, www.sba.gov/sbdc for SBDCs or www.sba.gov/services/ and choose "Women's Business Centers from the "Counseling & Assistance" heading at the bottom.



These professionals can also help you with writing a formal business plan, filling out loan applications to finance your business, managing and expanding your business, finding opportunities to sell your goods or services to the government, recovering from disaster or acting as advocates for small businesses with Congress and regulatory agencies.

The SBA even has programs for helping special audiences, such as women and veterans, become small business owners.

Most new business owners who succeed have planned for every phase of their success. Thomas Edison, the great American inventor, once said, "Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration." That same philosophy also applies to starting a business.

First you'll need to generate a little bit of perspiration deciding whether you're the right type of person to start your own business.

ON THE UPSIDE

It's true, there are a lot of reasons not to start your own business. But for the right person, the advantages of business ownership far outweigh the risks.

- You get to be your own boss.
- Hard work and long hours directly benefit you, rather than increasing profits for someone else.
- A new venture is exciting.
- Earnings and growth potential are far less limited.
- Running a business will provide endless variety, challenge and opportunities to learn.

1. Are you a self-starter?

It will be up to you – not someone else telling you – to develop projects, organize your time and follow through on details.

2. How well do you get along with different personalities?

Business owners need to develop working relationships with a variety of people including customers, vendors, staff, bankers, lawyers, accountants and consultants. Can you deal with a demanding client, an unreliable vendor or a cranky staff person?

3. How good are you at making decisions?

Small business owners are required to make decisions constantly, often quickly, under pressure.

4. Do you have the physical and emotional stamina to run a business?

Business ownership can be challenging, fun and exciting. But it's also a lot of hard work. Can you face 12-hour workdays six or seven days a week?

5. How well do you plan and organize?

Research indicates many business failures could have been avoided through better planning. Good organization – of financials, inventory, schedules, production – can help avoid pitfalls.

IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR YOU?

In business, there are no guarantees. There is simply no way to eliminate all the risks associated with starting a small business – but you can improve your chances of success with good planning, preparation, and insight. Start by evaluating your strengths and weaknesses as a potential owner and manager of a small business. Carefully consider each of the following questions:

Are you a self-starter? It will be entirely up to you to develop projects, organize your time, and follow through on details.

How well do you get along with different personalities? Business owners need to develop working relationships with a variety of people including customers, vendors, staff, bankers, and professionals such as lawyers, accountants, or consultants. Can you deal with a demanding client, an unreliable vendor, or a cranky receptionist if your business interests demand it?

How good are you at making decisions? Small business owners are required to make decisions constantly – often quickly, independently, and under pressure.

Do you have the physical and emotional stamina to run a business? Business owner-

ship can be exciting, but it's also a lot of work. Can you face six or seven 12-hour workdays every week?

How well do you plan and organize? Research indicates that poor planning is responsible for most business failures. Good organization – of financials, inventory, schedules, and production – can help you avoid many pitfalls.

Is your drive strong enough? Running a business can wear you down emotionally. Some business owners burn out quickly from having to carry all the responsibility for the success of their business on their own shoulders. Strong motivation will help you survive slowdowns and periods of burnout.

How will the business affect your family? The first few years of business start-up can be hard on family life. It's important for family members to know what to expect and for you to be able to trust that they will support you during this time. There also may be financial difficulties until the business becomes profitable, which could take months or years. You may have to adjust to a lower standard of living or put family assets at risk in the short-term.

Once you've answered those questions, you should consider what type of business you want to start.

FRANCHISING

Franchisees have been active participants in the SBA's small business loan program for many years.

There are primarily two forms of franchising:

- 1) product/trade name franchising and
- 2) business format franchising.

In the simplest form of franchising, while you own the business, its operation is governed by the terms of the franchise agreement. For many, this is the chief benefit for franchising. You are able to capitalize on a business format, trade name, trademark and/or support system provided by the franchisor. But you operate as an independent contractor with the ability to make a profit or sustain a loss commensurate with your ownership.

There are more than 3,000 franchised businesses. The challenge is to decide on one that both interests you and is a good investment. Many franchising experts suggest that you comparison shop by looking at multiple franchise opportunities before deciding on the one that's right for you.

Some of the things you should look at when evaluating a franchise: profitability, effective financial management and other controls, a good image, integrity and commitment, and a successful industry.

If you are concerned about the risk involved in a new, independent business venture, then franchising may be the best business option for you. Remember that hard work, dedication and sacrifice are key elements for success.

For more information visit the SBA Web site at:

www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/start/ and click on "Buy a Franchise" from the menu on the right side; or visit the Franchise Registry at www.franchiseregistry.com/ or call your local SBA office.

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Go To:

www.franmarket.com/sba

HOME-BASED BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

Going to work used to mean traveling from home to a plant, store or office. Today many people do some or all their work at home.

Garages, basements and attics are being transformed into the corporate headquarters of the newest entrepreneurs – the home-based business person.

Getting Started

Before diving headfirst into a home-based business, you must know why you are doing it. To succeed, your business must be based on something greater than a desire to be your own boss. You must plan and make improvements and adjustments along the road.

Ask yourself these questions – and remember, there are no best or right reasons for starting a home-based business. But it is important to understand what the venture involves.

Working under the same roof where your family lives may not prove to be as easy as it seems. It's important to work in a professional environment. One suggestion is to set up a separate office in your home to create this professional environment.

Ask yourself:

- Can I switch from home responsibilities to business work?
- Do I have the self-discipline to maintain schedules?
- Can I deal with the isolation of working from home?
- Am I a self-starter?

Finding Your Niche

Choosing a home business must be approached carefully. Before you invest time, effort and money.

Ask yourself:

- Does my home have the space for a business?
- Can I identify and describe the business I want to establish?
- Can I identify my business product or service?
- Is there a demand for that product or service?
- Can I successfully run the business from home?

Legal Requirements

A home-based business is subject to many of the same laws and regulations affecting other businesses.

Some general areas include:

- Zoning regulations. If your business operates in violation of them, you could be fined or shut down.
- Product restrictions. Certain products cannot be produced in the home. Most states outlaw home production of fireworks, drugs, poisons, explosives, sanitary or medical products and toys. Some states also prohibit home-based businesses from making food, drink or clothing.

Be sure to consult an attorney and your state's department of labor to find out which laws and regulations will affect your business. Additionally, check on registration and accounting requirements needed to open your home-based business. You may need a work certificate or license from the state. Your business name may need to be registered with the state. For home-based businesses, a separate business telephone and bank account are normally required.

Also remember, if you have employees you are responsible for withholding income and social-security taxes, and for complying with minimum wage and employee health and safety laws.

If you're convinced that working from home is for you, it's time to create your business plan. The SBA and its resource partners, such as SCORE, SBDCs and WBCs can help make the process easier.

WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

Women entrepreneurs are changing the face of America's economy. The SBA serves women entrepreneurs nationwide through its various programs and services, some of which are designed especially for women. There are women's business ownership representatives in every SBA district office to help women access all of SBA's programs and services, including loan guaranties, federal contracting opportunities, training, counseling and more. These local representatives can also provide information about other local resources available for women entrepreneurs.

Another valuable tool available for women business owners and entrepreneurs is the Women's Business Center Program, funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the SBA. Located across the country, approximately 100 WBCs provide training, technical assistance, counseling and mentoring specifically to women, especially those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. Mindful of the special needs of women entrepreneurs, the centers try to offer their services at the times and in the places most convenient to economically challenged women.

In addition, some centers provide child care, and many provide their materials in Spanish and other languages, depending on the unique needs of the communities in which they are located. Many classes offered by the centers are either free or offered for a small fee. And often there are scholarships to help those who need them.

If you can't get to a Women's Business Center, the full range of services is available through the SBA's Web site for women entrepreneurs, which provides access to all of the SBA's online services, including its extensive library of information, training courses and electronic tools designed to help small businesses. This site also contains information about the services available in local communities.

To find it, click on: <http://www.sba.gov/services/> and choose "Women's Business Centers" from the "Counseling & Assistance" heading at the bottom.

For additional information, contact one of the following:

Central Alabama

Women's Business Center

(A project of the Schlarb Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs)
2 N. 20th Street, Suite 830
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 453-0249 • (205) 453-0253 Fax
(866) 252-5787 Toll Free
Edith Ingram, Director
edithcawbc.org
www.cawbc.org
Serves Blount, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Talladega, Tuscaloosa and Walker Counties.

Women's Business Center of Southern Alabama

1301 Azalea Road, Suite 201A
Mobile, AL 36693
(251) 660-2725 or (800) 378-7461
(251) 660-8854 Fax
Sylvia Browder
wbac@ceebic.org
www.ceebic.org/~wbac
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(251) 445-0970 • (251) 626-6992 Fax

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Huntsville, AL 35801
(256) 213-2727 • (256) 883-9943 Fax
Joanne Randolph, Executive Director
joanne.randolph@wbcna.org
www.wbcna.org

Other Women's Programs

U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.sblink.us/html/uswcc.aspx>

National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) – Birmingham

P.O. Box 55414
Birmingham, AL 35255-5414
(205) 970-6316 ext. 324
Voice Message Center
ruwena_healy@yahoo.com
www.nawbobirmingham.org

Women's Business Council

c/o Huntsville/Madison County
Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 804
Huntsville, AL 35804
(256) 535-2011
jjeffers@hsvchamber.org

Women's Business Center of North Alabama

185 Chateau Drive, Suite 200 D
Huntsville, AL 35802
Joanne Randolph, Executive Director
(256) 213-2727 • (256) 430-8407 Fax
www.wbcna.org
Serves North Alabama Counties

Women's Economic Development Council

Web: www.wedc-online.com
info@wedc-online.com

Women's Economic Development Foundation

www.wedcfoundation.org

VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The SBA offers a variety of services to American veterans who have made or are seeking to make the transition from soldier to small business owner. Each of SBA's 69 district offices throughout the country has designated a Veterans Business Development Officer to help veterans prepare and plan for entrepreneurship. The Veterans Business Outreach Program provides entrepreneurial development services such as business training, counseling and mentoring to eligible veterans owning or considering starting a small business. SBDCs and SCORE also provide management assistance to veterans who are current and prospective small business owners. SCORE also provides resources and counseling services online at: www.score.org

The SBA offers special assistance for activated Reserve and National Guard members and the small businesses they work in or own. Any self-employed Reserve or Guard member with an existing SBA loan can request from their SBA lender or SBA district office, loan payment deferrals, interest rate reductions

and other relief after they receive their activation orders.

The SBA offers special low-interest-rate financing to small businesses when an owner or essential employee is called to active duty. The Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program provides loans to eligible small businesses to cover operating costs that cannot be met due to the loss of a key employee called to active duty in the reserves or National Guard. Small businesses may apply for MREIDLs of up to \$1.5 million if they have been financially impacted by the loss of an essential employee. The SBA has created a special Web page specifically for Reserve and Guard members at: www.sba.gov/reservists

To ensure that veterans, service-disabled veterans and Reserve and National Guard member entrepreneurs receive special consideration in all its entrepreneurial programs and resources, the SBA has established a fully staffed Office of Veterans Business Development. OVBD develops and distributes various informational materials for entrepreneurship such as the Veterans Business Resource Guide, VETGazette, Getting Veterans Back to Work, and various other materials. Veterans may access these resources and

other assistance from OVBD by visiting the Web site at: www.sba.gov/VETS/

For more information on special government contracting programs for veterans and service-disabled veterans, please check the Contracting Opportunities section of this publication.

NATIVE AMERICAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The SBA also features programs for American Indians, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians seeking to create, develop and expand small businesses. These groups have full access to the necessary business development and expansion tools available through the agency's entrepreneurial development, lending and procurement programs. More information is at: www.sba.gov/naa

CHOOSING YOUR BUSINESS STRUCTURE

You may operate your business under one of many organizational structures generally chosen for liability and tax reasons. The most

Greater Mobile Development Corporation

SBA 504 FINANCING

Using the Small Business 504 Program, the GMDC provides financing to small businesses in Alabama who wish to acquire or construct their own building or expansion of an existing building. The SBA 504 Loan provides long-term, fixed asset financing for small businesses.

Why Choose GMDC:

GMDC has the industry experience and works directly with the small business to develop financing packages.

If these advantages sound good to you:

- Lower down payment (10-15%)
- 20 year, Fixed interest rate financing
- Below Market Rate financing

Then Call GMDC at (251) 650-0826

Teresa Sands
Greater Mobile Development Corporation
1301 Azalea Road • Mobile, AL 36693
E-mail: gmdc@ceebic.org

Introduction

common organizational structures are sole proprietorships, general and limited partnerships, "C" and "S" corporations and limited liability companies.

Each structure offers unique tax and liability benefits appropriate for different personnel situations. If you're uncertain where to start, contact your local SBA office, SBDC, SCORE or WBC for assistance.

Sole Proprietorship

One person operating a business as an individual is a sole proprietorship. It's the most common form of business organization. Profits are taxed as income to the owner personally. The personal tax rate is usually lower than the corporate tax rates. The owner has complete control of the business, but faces unlimited liability for its debts. There is very little government regulation or reporting.

General Partnership

A partnership exists when two or more persons join together in the operation and management of a business. Partnerships are subject to relatively little regulation and are fairly easy to establish. A formal partnership is recommended to address potential conflicts such as, who will be responsible for performing each task; what, if any, consultation is needed between partners before major decisions, what happens when a partner dies, and so on.. Under a general partnership each partner is liable for all debts of the business. Profits are taxed as income to the partners based on their ownership percentage.

Limited Partnership

Like a general partnership, this is established by an agreement between two or more individuals. However, there are two types of partners.

- A general partner has greater control in some aspects of the partnership. For example, only a general partner can decide to dissolve the partnership. General partners have no limits on the dividends they can receive from profit so they incur unlimited liability.
- Limited partners can only receive a share of profits based on the proportional amount on their investment, and the liability is similarly limited in proportion to their investment.

"C" Corporation

A "C" corporation is a legal entity made up of persons who have a charter legally recognizing the corporation as a separate entity having its own rights, privileges and liabilities, apart from those of the individuals forming the corporation. It's the most complex form of business organization and is comprised of shareholders, directors and officers. The corporation can own assets, borrow money and perform business functions without directly involving the owners. Corporations are subject to more government regulation and have the advan-

tage of limited liability, but not total protection from lawsuits.

Subchapter "S" Corporation

This is a special section of the Internal Revenue Code and permits a corporation to be taxed as a partnership or sole proprietorship, with profits taxed at the individual, rather than the corporate rate. A business must meet certain requirements for Subchapter "S" status. Contact the IRS for information.

LLCs and LLPs

The limited liability company is a popular business form. It combines selected corporate and partnership characteristics while still maintaining status as a legal entity distinct from its owners. As a separate entity it can acquire assets, incur liabilities and conduct business. It limits liability for the owners. LLC owners risk only their investment, not personal assets. The limited liability partnership is similar to the LLC, but it is aimed at professional organizations.

WRITING A BUSINESS PLAN

After you've thought about your business, the next step is to develop a business plan. The business plan is a formal document explaining in some detail your plans to develop a financially successful business. It's vitally important for two reasons:

- Preparing a business plan forces you to think through every aspect of your business. If you need outside money, your business plan will be one of the first things the lender or investor wants to see.
- A business plan serves as an assessment tool for you.

A comprehensive business plan is not done on the spur of the moment. It can be a long process, and you need good advice. The SBA and its resource partners, including Small Business Development Centers located on many college campuses, Veterans Business Outreach Centers SCORE, Counselors to America's Small Business, and Women's Business Centers, have the expertise to help you craft a winning business plan.

You can find the nearest SBDC at:

www.sba.gov/sbdc/

You can find the nearest VBOC at:

www.sba.gov/vets

The nearest SCORE chapter can be located at: www.score.org

To find WBCs, click on:

<http://www.sba.gov/services/> and choose

"Women's Business Centers" from the "Counseling & Assistance" heading at the bottom.

You can also find business-plan help on the SBA's Web site at:

<http://www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/> then choose "Writing a Business Plan" from the "Plan Your Business" menu along the bottom.

IN GENERAL, HERE'S WHAT A GOOD BUSINESS PLAN CONTAINS:

Introduction

- Give a detailed description of the business and its goals.
- Discuss ownership of the business and its legal structure.
- List the skills and experience you bring to the business.
- Discuss the advantages you and your business have over competitors.

Marketing

- Discuss the products and services your company will offer.
- Identify customer demand for your products and services.
- Identify your market, its size and locations.
- Explain how your products and services will be advertised and marketed.
- Explain your pricing strategy.

Financial Management

- Explain your source and the amount of initial equity capital.
- Develop a monthly operating budget for the first year.
- Develop an expected return on investment and monthly cash flow for the first year.
- Provide projected income statements, and balance sheets for a two-year period.
- Discuss your break-even point.
- Explain your personal balance sheet and method of compensation.
- Discuss who will maintain your accounting records and how they will be kept.
- Provide "what if" statements addressing alternative approaches to problems that may develop.

Operations

- Explain how the business will be managed day-to-day.
- Discuss hiring, personnel procedures.
- Discuss insurance, lease or rent agreements, and issues pertinent to your business.
- Account for the equipment necessary to produce your goods or services.
- Account for production and delivery of products and services.

Concluding Statement

Summarize your business goals and objectives and express your commitment to the success of your business. Once you have completed your business plan, review it with a

friend or business associate or SCORE counselor or Small Business Development Center representative.

When you feel comfortable with the content and structure, review and discuss it with your lender. Remember, the business plan is a flexible document that should change as your business grows.

BUSINESS.GOV

Business.gov, the official business link to the U.S. government, is managed by the SBA in partnership with federal agencies providing business-oriented programs and services.

Business.gov helps businesses save time and money spent on regulatory compliance by providing quick and easy access to business laws, government regulations, forms and agency contacts. The Web site also offers compliance guides and a compliance search mechanism.

The compliance guides provide easy access to resources and programs that help businesses understand their regulatory requirements and improve their operations. Organized by Business Area and Industries, these guides provide a one-stop shop for regulatory assistance and include links to clearly written fact sheets, guidelines, answers to frequently asked questions, interactive tools, training resources and contacts at federal regulatory agencies. Business.gov also features a unique search engine which intelligently locates, organizes and retrieves compliance assistance information published by federal regulatory agencies searchable by business topics or industry.

You're just a computer click away from help 24-hours a day at: www.business.gov

SCORE

SCORE is a 10,500-member volunteer association which operates under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. SCORE matches volunteer business-management counselors with clients in need of expert advice. SCORE has experts in virtually every area of business management and maintains a national skills roster to help identify the best counselor for a particular client. Volunteer counselors, whose collective experience spans the full range of American enterprise, share their management and technical expertise with both present and prospective small business owners.

A nonprofit association, SCORE has dedicated more than 40 years to helping small businesses succeed.

Most SCORE volunteers are retired business owners or managers, though some members are still actively employed. Volunteers work in or near their home communities to provide

management counseling and training to first-time entrepreneurs and current small business owners. They meet with clients at a SCORE chapter office, an SBA office or at the client's place of business.

Every effort is made to match a client's needs with a counselor who is experienced in a comparable line of business. All individual and team counseling is free; there may be a nominal fee for workshops and seminars.

Through in-depth counseling and training, SCORE volunteers help prospective and established small business owners and managers identify problems, determine the causes and find solutions.

Any small business can obtain help from SCORE. Whether you are considering starting your own business, have a business that is experiencing problems, are ready to expand, or need some other type of advice, SCORE can help. The approach is confidential and personal. You don't need to be applying for or have an SBA loan to participate in the program. In fact, an idea is all that is necessary; consultation and counseling before a business start-up is an important part of SCORE's service.

SCORE's Presence on the Internet

SCORE can also be found on the Internet at www.score.org. SCORE's presence on the Internet makes it possible to reach more small business clients than ever with mentoring and counseling services.

Business owners are now turning to the technology of the Web to fulfill their needs for information and advice. SCORE is primed to meet their requests for help by offering e-mail counseling, maps to local SCORE chapters, hotlinks to other business resources on the Internet and more at the click of a mouse. E-mail counseling is provided by the Cyberchapter, which now includes more than 1,200 online members. You can choose from almost 800 unique skills to find the cybercounselor who best suits your individual needs, including special counseling for veterans, service-disabled veterans and Reserve component members. Log on to SCORE's Internet site to take advantage of the many services SCORE has to offer your business.

For further information and/or assistance contact the SCORE location nearest you.

North Alabama Chapter 0084

c/o UAB Small Business Development Center
1055 S. 11th Street, Room 202
Birmingham, AL 35294
(205) 934-6868 • (205) 934-0538 Fax

Tuscaloosa Chapter 0407

c/o Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama
2200 University Boulevard/P.O. Box 020410
Tuscaloosa, AL 35402
(205) 553-0957 • (205) 391-0565 Fax

Southern Alabama Chapter 0457

c/o Mobile Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 2187
Mobile, AL 36601
(251) 431-8614 • (251) 431-8646 Fax

Shoals Chapter 0520

c/o UNA Small Business Development Center
P.O. Box 5250, Keller Hall
Florence, AL 35632-0001
(256) 765-4629 • (256) 765-4813 Fax

Alabama Capitol Chapter 0598

c/o Montgomery Chamber of Commerce
600 S. Court Street
Montgomery, AL 36014
(334) 240-6868 • (334) 240-6869 Fax

Baldwin County Chapter 0630

University of South Alabama,
Fairhope Campus
111 St. James Place
Fairhope, AL 36532
(251) 928-5687 • (251) 928-5838
(251) 928-6375 • (251) 928-1415 Fax

Branch Office:

Foley SCORE Office

c/o South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 1117
Foley, AL 36536
(251) 943-3291 • (251) 943-6810 Fax

East Alabama Chapter 0636

c/o Opelika Chamber of Commerce
601 Avenue A/P.O. Box 2366
Opelika, AL 36803-2366
(334) 741-0977 • (334) 749-4740 Fax

Northeastern Alabama Chapter 0638

c/o Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 1087
Anniston, AL 36202-1087
(256) 237-3536 • (256) 327-4338 Fax

Small Business Development Centers

Small Business Development Centers, in coordination with federal, state, local and private-sector resources, including funding through a cooperative agreement with the SBA, meet the needs of small businesses and promote economic development in local communities by helping create and retain jobs.

As the SBA's largest non-finance program, SBDCs meet the counseling and training needs of more than 650,000 start-ups or existing business clients annually.

SBDCs provide services such as development of business plans, manufacturing assistance, financial packaging assistance, contracting assistance and international trade assistance. Special emphasis areas include e-commerce, technology transfer, IRS, EPA and OSHA regulatory compliance, research and development, Defense Economic Transition Assistance, disaster recovery assistance and market research. Based on client needs, SBDCs tailor their serv-

Introduction

ices to meet the evolving needs of the local small business community.

SBDCs deliver management and technical assistance to small businesses using an effective business education network of 63 lead centers and more than 1,000 service-center locations contracted to manage a broad-based SBDC program. SBDCs are located throughout the U.S., District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, American Samoa and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Their services are available to all small businesses or prospective small businesses.

There are specialized programs for minorities, women, veterans, Reservists, people with disabilities, 8(a) businesses in all stages and persons in low- and moderate-income urban and rural areas.

For more information, visit the Web site at: www.sba.gov/SBDC

Alabama Small Business Development Consortium

William Campbell Jr., State Director
1500 1st Avenue N., Suite R118
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 307-6510 • (205) 307-6511 Fax
williamc@uab.edu
www.asbdc.org

Alabama Small Business Procurement System ASBDC

University of Alabama at Birmingham
Patricia K. Phillips,
Acting Procurement Director
2800 Milan Court, Suite 124
Birmingham, AL 35211-6908
(205) 943-6750 • (205) 943-6752 Fax
pkphillips@una.edu
www.asbdc.org

Alabama International Trade Center

The University of Alabama
Brian Davis, Director
Bidgood Hall, Room 201/P.O. Box 870396
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0396
(205) 348-7621 • (205) 348-6974 Fax
aitc@ua.edu
www.aitc.ua.edu

Alabama State University SBDC

Lorenza Patrick, Director
915 S. Jackson Street
Montgomery, AL 36014
(334) 229-4138 • (334) 269-1102 Fax
lpatrik@alasu.edu
www.cobanetwork.com

Auburn University SBDC

Jacki DiPofi, Director
Room 108, College of Business
Auburn University, AL 36849-5243
(334) 844-4220 • (334) 844-4268 Fax
jdipofi@business.auburn.edu

Jacksonville State University SBDC

Pat Shaddix, Director
700 Pelham Road N., 114 Merrill Hall
Jacksonville, AL 36265-9982
(256) 782-5271 • (256) 782-5179 Fax
sbdc@jsucc.jsu.edu
www.jsu.edu/depart/sbdc

Northeast Alabama Regional SBDC

(Alabama A&M University and the University of Alabama at Huntsville)
Dr. Lawrence B. Crowson, III, Director
225 Church Street N.W./P.O. Box 168
Huntsville, AL 35804-0168
(256) 535-2061 • (256) 535-2050 Fax
nearsbdc@hsvchamber.org
<http://nearsbdc.uah.edu>

Troy University SBDC

Sandra Lucas, Interim Director
102 Bibb Graves Hall
Troy, AL 36082-0001
(334) 670-3771 • (334) 670-3636 Fax
slucas@troy.edu
<http://sbdc.troy.edu>

The University of Alabama SBDC

Paavo Hanninen, Director
Bidgood Hall, Room 250/P.O. Box 870397
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0397
(205) 348-7011 • (205) 348-9644 Fax
phaninen@ualvm.ua.edu
<http://sbdc.cba.ua.edu/>

The University of Alabama at Birmingham SBDC

Ernie Gauld, Director
1055 11th Street S., Room 202
Birmingham, AL 35294
(205) 934-6760 • (205) 934-0538 Fax
egauld@uab.edu
www.business.uab.edu/sbdc

University of North Alabama SBDC

Dr. Rick Lester, Director
Box 5250, Keller Hall
Florence, AL 35632-0001
(256) 765-4629 • (256) 765-4813 Fax
cmlong@una.edu
www.una.edu/sbdc

University of South Alabama SBDC

Thomas Tucker, Director
Mitchell College of Business, Room 8
Mobile, AL 36688-0002
(251) 460-6004 • (251) 460-6246 Fax
ttucker@usouthal.edu
www.southalabama.edu/sbdc

University of West Alabama SBDC

Kenneth Walker, Director
Station 35
Livingston, AL 35470
(205) 652-3665 • (205) 652-3516 Fax
kwalker@uwa.edu
www.sbdc.uwa.edu

SUCCESS STORY

Thomasville Alabama Sawmill Rises From the Ashes



Thomasville Lumber Company, Inc.

James F. Dixon,
President
(334) 636-9622

What was once a sign of bad times, an idle sawmill destroyed by a fire, is now a boom to a small town in rural Clarke County, Alabama.

An unfortunate electrical fire in April 2001 shut down the operation of Coastal Lumber Company and ended 70 direct and 100 indirect jobs for people in Thomasville. Located in the heart of a vast southern pine forest, the former pine sawmill had been in operation since the 1960s, and was part of a large company with mill operations around the United States.

Fortunately, one key buyer put an offer on the table to purchase a majority of the new mill's production for export customers. With that in

hand, Thomasville Lumber secured an export working capital loan from First United Security Bank guaranteed by the SBA to purchase logs and carry short term receivables. "This was a real-maker," said Decastra who works for the Alabama International Trade Center, a member of the Alabama Small Business Development Consortium.

The SBA deal worked beautifully. On July 8, 2002, Thomasville Lumber Company resumed full production with 85 percent of its former employees returning to help the new business reopen and grow. Thanks to Dixon's persistence, the new mill is a big part of Thomasville's economy. The firm contributes in excess of \$2 million in direct payroll to the community with over 60 workers employed. It has sales of approximately \$10 million per year. The majority of the production from this high quality mill in rural Alabama is shipped overseas.

"We serve a niche in the marketplace," states Dixon. Not too bad for a sawmill that was left standing in ashes only a few years back.

Knowing the Rules

Paying Attention To Detail Can Save Time and Money



It may be inconceivable to you that your home-based consulting service or hand-knit sweater business would have to comply with any of the numerous local, state, and federal regulations, but in all likelihood it will. Avoid the temptation to ignore regulatory details. Doing so may avert some red tape in the short term, but could be an obstacle as your business grows. Taking the time to research the applicable regulations is as important as knowing your market. Below is a checklist of the most common requirements that affect small businesses, but it is by no means exhaustive. Bear in mind that regulations vary by industry. If you're in the food service business, for example, you will have to deal with the health department. If you use chemical solvents, you will have environmental compliances to meet. Carefully investigate the regulations that affect your industry.

Being out of compliance could leave you unprotected legally, lead to expensive penalties and jeopardize your business.

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

There are many forms of legal structure you may choose for your business. The most common structures are Sole Proprietorships, General and Limited Partnerships, C and S Corporations and Limited Liability Companies. Each legal structure offers organizational options which are appropriate for different personal situations and which affect tax and liability issues. We suggest you research each legal structure thoroughly and consult a tax accountant and/or attorney prior to making your decision.

BUSINESS LICENSES

There are many types of licenses, both state and local as well as professional. Depending on what you do and where you plan to operate, your business may be required to have various state and/or municipal licenses, certificates or permits.

Licenses are typically administered by a variety of state and departments. Consult your state or local government for assistance. For additional information, contact:

Day Care Licenses

Alabama Department of Human Resources
1321 - 5th Avenue S.
Birmingham, AL 35205
(205) 918-5100
www.dhr.state.al.us

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME

Registering your business name, after doing a search to make sure that it is not already in use, protects you from others who might be using the same name. For more information contact the county clerk's office in the county where your business is based or contact:

Alabama Secretary of State

Corporation Division
P.O. Box 5616
Montgomery, AL 36103-5616
(334) 242-5324
www.sos.state.al.us

BUSINESS INSURANCE

Like home insurance, business insurance protects the contents of your business against fire, theft and other losses. Contact your insurance agent or broker. It is prudent for any business to purchase a number of basic types of insurance. Some types of coverage are required by law, other simply make good business sense. The types of insurance listed below are among the most commonly used and are merely a starting point for evaluating the needs of your business.

Liability Insurance -- Businesses may incur various forms of liability in conducting their normal activities. One of the most common types is product liability, which may be incurred when a customer suffers harm from using the business product. There are many other types of liability, which are frequently related to specific industries. Liability law is constantly changing. An analysis of your liability insurance needs by a competent professional is vital in determining an adequate and appropriate level of protection for your business.

Property -- There are many different types of property insurance and levels of coverage available. It is important to determine the property you need to insure for the continuation of your business and the level of insurance you need to replace or rebuild. You must also understand the terms of the insurance, including any limitations or waivers of coverage.

Business Interruption -- While property insurance may pay enough to replace damaged or destroyed equipment or buildings, how will you pay costs such as taxes, utilities and other continuing expenses during the period between when the damage occurs and when the property is replaced? Business Interruption (or "business income") insurance can provide sufficient funds to pay your fixed expenses during a period of time when your business is not operational.

"Key Man" -- If you (and/or any other individual) are so critical to the operation of your business that it cannot continue in the event of your illness or death, you should consider "key man" insurance. This type of policy is frequently required by banks or government loan programs. It also can be used to provide continuity in operations during a period of ownership transition caused by the death or incapacitation of an owner or other "key" employee.

Automobile -- It is obvious that a vehicle owned by your business should be insured for both liability and replacement purposes. What is less obvious is that you may need special insurance (called "non-owned automobile coverage") if you use your personal vehicle on company business. This policy covers the business' liability for any damage which may result for such usage.

Officer and Director -- Under most state laws, officers and directors of a corporation may become personally liable for their actions on behalf of the company. This type of policy covers this liability.

Home Office -- If you are establishing an office in your home, it is a good idea to contact your homeowners' insurance company to update your policy to include coverage for office equipment. This coverage is not automatically included in a standard homeowner's policy.

EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

An EIN, Form SS-4, also known as a federal tax identification number, is used to identify a business entity. Generally all businesses need an EIN. You may apply for an EIN in a variety of ways, including online, phone, fax. Taxpayers can call a toll-free number, (800) 829-4933, to get an EIN. Internal Revenue Service customer service representatives are available to answer calls Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. customer's local time.

Taxpayers can fax EIN requests seven days a week/24 hours a day by dialing the fax number to one of three IRS Campus' that accept applications. The instructions on the newly revised Form SS-4, Application for Employer ID Number, indicate which IRS Campus is assigned to their specific state. Detailed information and an electronic SS-4 can be found at the IRS Small Business/Self Employed Community Web site at: www.irs.gov/smallbiz, click on New Businesses. Faxed applications are processed in four days. The IRS Campus' accepting faxed applications are:

Holtville, NY (631) 447-8960

Cincinnati, OH (859) 669-5760

Philadelphia, PA (215) 516-3990

IRS accepts third party Form SS-4's. Tax practitioners complete the new "Third Party Designee" section on their client's behalf by obtaining the client's signature on Form SS-4. IRS no longer requires that practitioners file a Form 2848, Power of Attorney or Form 8821, Tax Information Authorization to get an EIN for their clients.

Federal Self-Employment Tax

Everyone must pay Social Security and Medicare coverage. If you are self-employed, your contributions are made through the self-employment tax.

The IRS has publications, counselors and workshops available to help you sort it out. For more information contact the IRS at (800) 829-1040.

Business Tax Information

If you plan to hire employees you are also required to obtain a Federal Employee Identification Number from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). To obtain the registration form and reference documents, contact the IRS at (800) 829-1040 or visit their website: www.irs.gov/smallbiz for complete information. For more information, contact:

Alabama Department of Revenue

P.O. Box 327480

Montgomery, AL 36132-7710

www.ador.state.al.us

State Withholding

(334) 242-1300 • (334) 242-0112 Fax

Business Privilege Tax Division

(334) 353-7923

Corporate Tax Division

(334) 242-1200

Sales Tax Exemption Certificate

If you plan to sell products, you will need a Sales Tax Exemption Certificate. It allows you to purchase inventory, or materials, which will become part of the product you sell, from suppliers without paying taxes. It requires you to charge sales tax to your customers, which you are responsible for remitting to the state. You will have to pay penalties if it is found that you should have been taxing your products and now owe back taxes to the state. For information on Sales Tax issues, visit your state's Web page. For more information on Sales Tax issues, contact:

Sales & Use Tax Division

P.O. Box 327710

Montgomery, AL 36132-7710

(334) 242-1490

www.ador.state.al.us

FEDERAL INCOME TAX

Like the state income tax, the method of paying federal income taxes depends upon your legal form of business. The following procedures must be considered:

Sole Proprietorship: You must file IRS Federal Form Schedule C along with your personal Federal Income Tax return (Form 1040) and any other applicable forms pertaining to gains or losses in your business activity.

Partnership: You must file a Federal Partnership return (Form 1065). This is merely informational to show gross and net earnings of profit & loss. Also, each partner must report his share of partnership earnings on his individual Form 1040 based on the information from the K-1 filed with the Form 1065.

Corporation: You must file a Federal Corporation Income Tax (Form 1120) Return. You will also be required to file an personal federal income tax return (Form 1040) on your earnings from the corporation based on the W-2 received from your employer.

FEDERAL PAYROLL TAX

Federal Withholding Tax: Any business employing a person other than the owner must register with the IRS and acquire an EIN and pay federal withholding tax at least quarterly. File Form SS-4 with IRS to obtain number and required tax forms. Call (800) 829-3676 or (800) 829-1040 if you have questions.

Federal Insurance Contribution Act (FICA): Any business owner who employs one

person other than himself must pay the current rate of 6.20 percent on each employee's gross wages, up to \$87,900 for Social Security Benefits and 1.45 percent for Medicare from each wage paid through 2004. The employee contributes from wages, through payroll withholding, 6.20 percent for Social Security Benefits and 1.45 percent for Medicare on all wages paid for 2005. (Consult forms 1040 ES or Publication 15, Circular E.) Call (800) 829-3676 if you have questions.

Both these withholdings (federal withholding tax and FICA tax) require the preparation of a W-2 Form for each employee. The W-2 Form is due once a year and must be prepared, mailed and received by the employee before January 31 of the following year.

Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA): For 2007 the FUTA tax is .8 percent of wages paid during the year. The tax applies to the first \$7,000 you pay each employee as wages during the calendar year. The employer is responsible for paying FUTA tax. It must not be deducted from employee's wages. Form 940 must be prepared and paid by January 31 of the following year. Refer to Circular "E" Employer's Tax Guide, Publication 15 from Internal Revenue Service. Call (800) 829-3676 for information.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS

All employees must have a social security card. It must be signed by its owner, and you should always ask to see and personally record the social security number. Failure to do so may cause your employee to lose benefits and considerable trouble for yourself in back tracking to uncover the error.

Each pay day, your employees must receive a statement from you telling them what deductions were made and how many dollars were taken out for each legal purpose. This can be on the check as a detachable portion or in the form of an envelope with the items printed and spaces for dollar deductions to be filled in. No deductions may be made by any employer for any reason unless the employee has previously signed a paper authorizing the deduction. There are no exceptions.

EMPLOYEE CONSIDERATIONS

Taxes - If you have any employees, including officers of a corporation but not the sole proprietor or partners, you must make periodic payments, and/or file quarterly reports about payroll taxes and other mandatory deductions. You may contact these govern-

ment agencies for information, assistance and forms.

Social Security Administration
(800) 772-1213 • www.ssa.gov

**Federal Withholding
U.S. Internal Revenue Service**
(800) 829-1040 • www.irs.gov

Employee Insurance

If you hire employees you may be required to provide unemployment or workers' compensation insurance. For more information, contact one of the following:

Employee Insurance
Commissioner of Insurance
State of Alabama
P.O. Box 303351
Montgomery, AL 36130
(334) 269-3550
www.aldoi.gov

Unemployment Compensation Insurance
(334) 242-8025 • (334) 242-8258 Fax
<http://www.dir.state.al.us/uc>

Worker's Compensation Division
649 Monroe Street
Montgomery, AL 36130
(334) 353-0990 or (800) 528-5166
(334) 353-8262 Fax
www.dir.alabama.gov/wc

**Birmingham
City Wide
Local
Development
Company**

*"Helping
Small
Business
Grow
Is What
We Do Best"*

**110 12th Street North
Birmingham, AL
35203**

Get Your Business Up And Growing!

Birmingham City Wide administers the
Small Business Administration 504 Loan Program assisting
small businesses needing financial assistance for various reasons:

- Business Acquisition
- Construction
- Expansion
- Land & Building Renovation
- Equipment Purchases

The SBA 504 Loan provides long-term, fixed asset financing.

Let Us Lend You A Hand

205.250.6380

www.bbrc.biz

Birmingham City Wide Local Development Company is pleased to be part of the SBA 504 Loan Program. SBA has funded several hundred million dollars in 504 loans in the State of Alabama.

USCIS

The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires all employers to verify the employment eligibility of new employees. The law obligates an employer to process Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Business Liaison offers a selection of information bulletins and live assistance for this process through the Employer Hotline. In addition, USCIS forms and the Employer Handbook can be obtained by calling the Forms Hotline. For forms call (800) 870-3676, for the Employer Hotline call (800) 357-2099.

Workplace Program

Americans with Disabilities (ADA): For assistance or clarification with the ADA, call (800) 669-3362 or visit them at:

www.ada.gov

SAFETY & HEALTH REGULATIONS

All businesses with employees are required to comply with state and federal regulations regarding the protection of employees. OSHA outlines specific health and safety standards adopted by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Use of hazardous substances in businesses is highly regulated and there are heavy fines for non-compliance. For more information, contact:

Federal Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Department of Labor
820 First Street N.E.
Washington, DC 20020
(866) 487-2365 National Contact Center
www.dol.gov

Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA)

Birmingham Area Office
950 22nd Street N., Suite 1250
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 731-1534 • (205) 731-0504 Fax
<http://www.osha.gov>
Mobile Area Office
1141 Montlamar Drive, Suite 1006
Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 441-6131 • (251) 441-6396 Fax

U.S. Department of Labor

P.O. Box 303500
Montgomery, AL 36130-3500
(334) 242-3460 • (334) 240-3417 Fax
www.ala.labor.state.al.us

U.S. Department of Labor

Wage and Hour Division
2015 N. 2nd Avenue
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 731-1305 • (205) 731-3482 Fax
www.dol.gov

AL State Dept. of Industrial Relations

Tax Department
3460 3rd Avenue S.
Birmingham, AL 35202
(205) 254-1251 • (205) 254-1264 Fax

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

Ridgepark Place
1130 22nd Street S., Suite 2000
Birmingham, AL 35205
(205) 212-2100 • (205) 212-2101 Fax
www.eeoc.gov/birmingham

Alabama Department of Environmental Management Hazardous Substance Compliance

Use of hazardous substances in businesses is highly regulated and there are heavy fines for non-compliance. If you need information about air, water, land uses, solid waste and hazardous materials call or write:

Ground Water/Office of Underwater Storage Tanks

1400 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, AL 36110-2059
(334) 271-7700 • (334) 270-5631 Fax
www.adem.state.al.us

Department of Environmental Management

110 Vulcan Road
Homewood, AL 35209
(205) 942-6168 • (205) 941-1603 Fax
www.adem.state.al.us

Building Codes, Permits and Zoning

It is important to consider zoning regulations when choosing a site for your business. You may not be permitted to conduct business out of your home or engage in industrial activity in a retail district. Contact the business license office in the city or town in which the business is located.

Bar Coding

GS1 US™ (not a government agency) provides a unique company number that is used to create bar codes (including UPCs) for your products. Many stores require bar coding on the packaged products they sell. Many industrial and manufacturing companies also use bar coding to identify items they receive and ship. GS1 US, formerly the Uniform Code Council, Inc.® (UCC®), provides tools and assistance to help you meet these requirements. For information, visit www.gs1us.org/pc. For additional questions, contact:

GS1 US

7887 Washington Village Drive, Suite 300
Dayton, OH 45459-8605
(937) 435-3870

Federal Registration of Trademarks and Patents

Trademarks are names or symbols used in any commerce that is subject to regulation by state government or the U.S. Congress.

To register a trademark, contact:

Patent & Trademark Office:

P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
(800) 786-9199
www.uspto.gov

Trademark Information Hotline

(703) 308-9000

STATE REGISTRATION OF A TRADEMARK

Trademarks and service marks may be registered in a state for a term of 10 years.

Caution: Federally registered trademarks may conflict with and supersede state registered business and product names. Businesses are encouraged to check for conflicts with federal trademarks.

Copyrights

Copyrights protect the thoughts and ideas of authors, composers and artists. A copyright prevents illegal copying of written matter, works of art or computer programs. In order to ensure copyright protection, the copyright owner should always include notices on all copies of the work. For general information contact:

U.S. Copyright Office

U.S. Library of Congress
James Madison Memorial Building
Washington, DC 20559
(202) 707-9100 - Order Line
(202) 707-3000 - Information Line

Patents

Additional information is provided in the publications, General Information Concerning Patents and other publications distributed through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

For more information, contact the:

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

(800) 786-9199 • www.uspto.gov
Other Resources

Better Business Bureau

Web: www.bbb.org

Business Council of Alabama

P.O. Box 76
Montgomery, AL 36101-0076
(334) 834-6000

Government Printing Office

www.gpoaccess.gov

State Information Operator

(334) 242-8000

Getting Approved

Financing Options To Start Or Grow Your Business



Many entrepreneurs need financial resources to start or expand a small business themselves and must combine what they have with other sources of financing. These sources can include family and friends, venture-capital financing, and business loans.

The SBA Resource Guide will discuss the primary business loan programs of SBA and the equity financing program. These are: the 7(a) Loan Program, the Certified Development Company or 504 Loan Program, the MicroLoan Program and the Small Business Investment Program. The distinguishing features for these programs are the total dollar amount that can be borrowed, the type of lenders who can provide these loans, the uses for the loan proceeds, and the terms placed on the borrower.

Note: The SBA does not offer grants to start or grow a business. The only grants

the SBA is authorized to provide to private businesses are to are for businesses providing management technical assistance to other businesses.

When you seek a business loan familiarize yourself with the SBA's business loan programs to see if they may be a viable option. The three principal players in each of these programs are — the small business, the lender and the SBA. The business should have its business plan prepared before it applies for a loan. This plan should explain what resources will be needed to accomplish the desired business purpose including the cost of everything, the applicants' contribution, use of loan proceeds, collateral, and most important, an explanation of how the business will be able to repay the loan in a timely manner.

The lender will analyze the application to see if it meets the lender's criteria as well as SBA requirements. SBA will look to the lender

to do much of the analysis before it provides its guaranty to the lender's loan or provides the microlenders with funds to re-lend to the business. The SBA's business loan programs provide a key source of financing for viable small businesses that have real potential, but cannot qualify for loans from traditional sources.

7(A) LOAN PROGRAM

The 7(a) Loan Program is the SBA's primary business loan program. It is the agency's most used non-disaster financial assistance programs because of its flexibility in loan structure, variety of loan proceeds uses, and availability. This program has broad eligibility requirements and credit criteria to accommodate a wide range of financing needs.

The business loans that SBA guarantees do not come from the agency, but rather from banks and other lenders, including development companies, intermediaries and venture capital firms that make loans to investment capital. The loans are funded by these organizations and they make the decisions to approve or not approve the requests.

The SBA guaranty reduces the lender's risk of borrower non-payment. If the borrower defaults, the lender can request SBA to pay the lender that percentage of the outstanding balance guaranteed by SBA. This allows the lender to recover a portion of what it lent from SBA if the borrower can't make the payments. The borrower is still obligated for the full amount.

To qualify for an SBA guaranty, a small business must meet the lender's criteria and the 7(a) requirements. In addition the lender must certify that it would not provide this loan under the proposed terms and conditions unless it can obtain an SBA guaranty. If the SBA is going to provide a lender with a guar-

anty, the loan must be eligible, creditworthy and structured under conditions acceptable to SBA.

PERCENTAGE OF GUARANTIES

The SBA only guarantees a portion of any particular loan so each loan will also have an unguaranteed portion giving the lender a certain amount of exposure and risk. The percentage of guaranty depends on either the dollar amount or the method by which the lender obtains its guaranty. For 7(a) loans of \$150,000 or less the SBA will guaranty as much as 85 percent and for loans over \$150,000 the SBA can provide a guaranty of up to 75 percent. The maximum loan amount is \$2 million and the maximum guaranty amount to any one business is \$1.5 million. The one exception is when a business needs both working capital and fixed assets to promote exporting in which case the SBA can guaranty two loans with a maximum level of participation at \$1.75 million.

Loans made under the SBAExpress program, which is discussed subsequently, have a 50 percent guaranty.

INTEREST RATES AND FEES

Both fixed and variable interest rates are available. Rates are set based on the lowest prime rate* and maturity. For loans with maturities of less than seven years the rate will be fixed or start at prime plus no more than 2.25 percent. For loans with maturities of seven years or more the rate can be as high as prime plus 2.75 percent. For loans under \$50,000 and for loans processed through SBAExpress, rates are permitted to be higher.

The SBA charges the lender a nominal upfront fee to provide its guaranty, and the lender may pass this charge on to the borrower. The fee is based on the total amount of the loan and whether the loan is short-term (12 months or less) or long term (over 12 months). The fee is computed based on the amount that SBA guarantees.

On any loan with a maturity of one year or less, the fee is just 0.25 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. On loans with maturities of more than one year, the guaranty fee is 2 percent of the SBA guaranteed portion on loans up to \$150,000; 3 percent on loans over \$150,000 but not over \$700,000; and 3.5 percent on loans over \$700,000. There is also an additional fee of 0.25 percent on any guaranteed portion over \$1 million.

* All references to the prime rate refer to the lowest prime rate as published in the Wall

Street Journal on the day the application is received by the SBA.

7(A) LOAN MATURITIES

SBA loan programs are generally intended to encourage longer term small business financing, but actual loan maturities are based on the ability to repay, the purpose of the loan proceeds, and the useful life of the assets financed. However, maximum loan maturities have been established: 25 years for real estate; up to 10 years for equipment (depending on the useful life of the equipment); and generally up to 10 years for working capital. Short-term loans and revolving lines of credit are also available through the SBA to help small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working capital needs.

STRUCTURE

Most loans are repaid with monthly payments of principal and interest. For fixed-rate loans the payments stay the same whereas for variable rate loans the lender can re-establish the payment amount when the interest rates change or at other intervals as negotiated with the borrower. Applicants can request that the lender establish the loan with interest-only payments during the start-up and expansion phases (when applicable) to allow the business time to generate the income to start repaying the loan. There are no balloon payments or call provisions allowed on any 7(a) loan. The lender may not charge a prepayment penalty if the loan is paid off before maturity, but the SBA will charge the borrower a prepayment fee if the loan has a maturity of 15 or more years and is pre-paid during the first three years.

COLLATERAL

The SBA expects every loan to be fully secured, however the SBA will not decline a request to guaranty a loan if the only unfavorable factor is insufficient collateral. What these two policies mean is that every SBA loan is to be secured by all available assets (both business and personal) until the recovery value equals the loan amount or until all assets have been pledged to the extent that they are reasonably available, to adequately secure the loan. Personal guaranties are required from all the principal owners of the business. Liens on personal assets of the principals may be required.

ELIGIBILITY

7(a) loan eligibility is based on four different factors. The first is size, as all loan recipients must be classified as "small" by SBA. The basic size standards are outlined below. A more in-depth listing of standards can be found at:

<http://www.sba.gov/services/contracting> then select "Size Standards" from the "Contracting Opportunities" listing along the bottom.

SBA Size Standards:

- Manufacturing from 500 to 1,500 employees
- Wholesaling — 100 employees
- Services from \$4.5 million to \$32.5 million in average annual receipts
- Retailing from \$6.5 million to \$26.5 million
- General construction from \$6.5 million to \$32 million
- Agriculture from \$750,000 to \$16.5 million in average annual receipts

Nature of Business

The second eligibility factor is based on the nature of the business and the process by which it generates income or the customers it serves. The SBA has general prohibitions against providing financial assistance to businesses involved in such activities as lending, speculating, passive investment, pyramid sales, loan packaging, presenting live performances of a prurient sexual nature, and businesses involved in gambling or any illegal activity.

The SBA will also not support non-profit businesses, private clubs that limit membership on a basis other than capacity, businesses that promote a religion, businesses owned by individuals incarcerated or on probation or parole, municipalities, and situations where the business or its owners previously failed to repay a federal loan or federally assisted financing.

Use of Proceeds

The third eligibility factor is what the loan proceeds can and can not be used for. 7(a) proceeds can be used to: purchase machinery, equipment, fixtures, supplies, leasehold improvements, as well as land and/or buildings that will be occupied by the business borrower.

Proceeds can also be used to:

- Expand or renovate facilities;
- Finance receivables and augment working capital;
- Finance seasonal lines of credit;
- Construct commercial buildings; and
- Refinance existing debt under certain conditions.

7(a) loan proceeds cannot be used to pay an associate of the business, for floor plan financing, research & development (except for the Energy Loan Program) or to have funds for the purpose of making investments.

Miscellaneous Factors

The fourth factor involves a variety of requirements such as SBA credit elsewhere and utilization of personal assets requirements where the applicant business and its principal owners must use their own resources before getting a loan guaranteed by SBA. It also includes SBA's anti-discrimination rules and prohibitions on lending to agricultural enterprises because there are other agencies of the federal government with programs to such businesses.

However, some factors here are the SBA's most important eligibility rules, including:

- Every loan must be for a sound business purpose;
- There must be sufficient invested equity in the business so it can operate on a sound financial basis;
- There must be a potential for long-term success;
- The owners must be of good character and reputation; and
- All loans must be so sound as to reasonably assure repayment.

More can be found out about SBA's eligibility requirements at:

<http://www.sba.gov/services/> then select "Loan Eligibility" from the "Financial Assistance" list along the bottom.

What to Take to the Lender

Documentation requirements may vary; contact your lender for the information you must supply.

Common requirements include the following:

- Purpose of the loan.
- History of the business.
- Financial statements for three years (existing businesses).
- Schedule of term debts (existing businesses).
- Aging of accounts receivable and payable (existing businesses).
- Projected opening-day balance sheet (new businesses).
- Lease details.
- Amount of investment in the business by the owner(s).
- Projections of income, expenses and cash

flow as well as the assumptions.

- Personal financial statements on the principal owners.
- Resume(s) of the principal owners and managers.

How the 7(a) Program Works

Applicants submit their loan application to a lender for their initial review. The lender will generally review the credit merits of the request before they decide if they will make the loan themselves or if they will need an SBA guaranty. If a guaranty is needed, the lender will also review eligibility, and the applicant should be prepared to complete some additional documents before the lender sends its request for guaranty to the SBA.

In guaranteeing the loan, the SBA assures the lender that, in the event the borrower does not repay the loan, the government will reimburse the lending institution for a portion of its loss. By providing this guaranty, the SBA is able to help tens of thousands of small businesses every year get financing they would not otherwise obtain.

After SBA approval, the lender is notified that its loan has been guaranteed. The lender then will work with the applicant to make sure the terms and conditions are met before closing the loan, disbursing the funds, and assuming responsibility for collection and general servicing. The borrower makes monthly loan payments directly to the lender. As with any loan, the borrower is responsible for repaying the full amount of the loan in a timely manner.

What the SBA Looks for:

- Ability to repay the loan on time from the projected operating cash flow.
- Owners and operators who are of good character.
- Feasible business plan.
- Management expertise and commitment necessary for success.
- Sufficient funds, including the SBA guaranteed loan, to operate the business on a sound financial basis (for new businesses, this includes the resources to meet start-up expenses and the initial operating phase).
- Adequate equity invested in the business.
- Veterans.
- Sufficient collateral to secure the loan or all available collateral if the loan cannot be fully secured.

How Lenders Apply For a Guaranty

Once the lender (bank, credit union, savings & loan, or other private-sector lender) decides to apply for an SBA guaranty it has several options. It can use standard SBA processing procedures and have SBA conduct a full analysis of the application the lender submits.

This may be beneficial for lenders with limited experience in making SBA loans. Another option available to selected lenders with staff dedicated to making SBA-guaranteed loans is the Preferred Lenders Program where SBA delegates the credit decision to the lender, and SBA will not re-analyze the lender's credit decisions. This results in less overall processing time. Finally the lender may be able to choose Express processing procedures which delegates the credit decisions to the lender and allows the lender to use many of its own forms and procedures.

More on Express processing follows.

SBAExpress

SBAExpress is available to lenders as a way to obtain a guaranty on smaller loans up to \$350,000. The program authorizes selected experienced lenders to use mostly their own forms, analysis and procedures to process, service and liquidate SBA-guaranteed loans. The SBA guarantees up to 50 percent of an SBAExpress loan. Loans under \$25,000 do not require collateral. Like most 7(a) loans, maturities are usually five to seven years for working capital and up to 25 years for real estate or equipment. Revolving lines of credit are allowed for a maximum of seven years. For a list of lenders in your area, contact your local SBA office available at www.sba.gov.

Banco Popular

8523 Commodity Circle, Suite 100
Orlando, FL 32819
Brenda Bowers
(407) 370-7444 • (407) 370-7777 Fax

BankTrust

850 Hillcrest Road
Mobile, AL 36695
James Alexander
(251) 431-7814 • (251) 776-5554 Fax

Capital One

(877) 561-9847
www.capitalone.com/smallbusiness

Compass Bank

P.O. Box 10566
Birmingham, AL 35296
John Baites, Vice President
(205) 297-3346 • (205) 297-7672 Fax

Community South Bank

696 Lake Crest Drive
Hoover, AL 35226
Earl Cambron
(205) 733-7111 • (205) 733-7112 Fax

Covenant Bank

7929 Parkway Drive Leeds
AL 35064
Heather Jones, Credit Analyst SBA Specialist
(205) 702-2265 • (205) 702-2257 Fax



Diane Roehrig, President,
Alacom Finance

We Have Money For Business

Your business is growing by leaps and bounds. It's time to expand. However, there's a small problem. You need financing. Where do you turn? There are a number of options available.

"If you're a small or medium size company, you need to stop by and see us first," explains Diane Roehrig, president of Alacom Finance. "We're in the business of helping businesses grow and prosper."

Alacom Finance is a Birmingham-based Certified Development Company (CDC). Like all CDCs, Alacom is a privately owned non-profit corporation created to contribute to the economic development of its community. CDCs work with the SBA and private sector lenders, like banks, to provide financing for small to medium sized businesses. There are approximately 270 CDCs nationwide.

Throughout the last 27 years, Alacom Finance has excelled in during everything within its power to help a business receive financing.

Its specialty is to create innovative packages, which include banks in local communities, municipalities, the SBA and other financial entities and institutions. "Whatever it takes," Diane says as she leans forward in her chair to make the point.

One of the best sources for her "whatever it takes" attitude is the SBA backed 504 Loan Program. This program allows business to take on an expansion program with the least amount of risk, and therefore, the highest probability of success.

"To be eligible, the business generally must be operated for profit and have a tangible net worth of less than \$7 million, and have an average net income of less than 2.5 million, after taxes, for the preceding two years," Diane explains. "The project must have a positive economic impact, generally evidenced by one job created by every \$50,000 of SBA 504 debenture amount.

Although there are limitations to what the 504 Loan program will

cover, there is an array of business expansion expenses that are allowed. Among them are purchasing land and improvements, including existing buildings, grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping; constructing new facilities, modernizing renovating, or converting existing facilities, purchasing machinery and equipment and interest on interim loans, professional fees and soft costs related to the project. The 504 Loan program cannot be used for working capital, inventory purchases, debt consolidation or refinancing.

In addition to the 504 Loan program, Alacom Finance also facilitates: other forms of business lending, electronic payment processing, insurance products, outsourced digital bookkeeping, web hosting, web design and development, data storage, tax services, business plan preparation, accounts receivable and contract financing.

"Alacom Finance made my dreams come true. With their help I developed one of the nicest marinas on Lake Guntersville."

Susan Sylvius
Owner, Signal Point Marina
Guntersville, AL



"I especially like the way Alacom Finance doesn't leave you at the closing table. They stay with you for the life of the loan, offering any assistance needed."

Paul Shaw
Shaw-Anderson, LLC
(Divorce attorneys)
Birmingham, AL



"There are not enough words in the English dictionary to explain how important Alacom Finance was to the start of my business."

Mark Noble
Owner, PRSM Sport & Fitness
Huntsville, AL



Loan Programs Offered By Alacom Finance

- The Alacom 504 Loan
- 7(a) Guaranteed Loans
- Export Loans

Additional Services Provided By Alacom Finance

- Special Purpose Financing
- Economic Development Assistance
- Export Working Capital Programs
- Non-recourse Loan Assistance
- Business Management Consulting
- Referral Services
- Electronic Payment Processing
- Insurance Products
- Outsourced Digital Bookkeeping
- Web Hosting
- Web Design and Development
- Data Storage
- Tax Services
- Business Plan Preparation
- Accounts Receivable
- Contract Financing

For more information on how
Alacom Finance can help your
business thrive, contact Diane
Roehrig at 1-800-239-5909

or visit our Web site at

www.alacom.com



Alacom Finance

Exchange Bank of Alabama

230 N. 3rd Street/P.O. Box 1100
Gadsden, AL 35902
Mike Yother
(256) 547-2572, Ext. 1036
(256) 543-7245 Fax

First National Bank of Brundidge

137 S. Main Street
Brundidge, AL 36010
Loretta Williamson
(334) 735-2351 • (334) 735-2983 Fax

Redstone Federal Credit Union

220 Wynn Drive
Huntsville, AL 35805
Jack Wright
(800) 234-1234, Ext. 3636
(256) 722-3759 Fax

Regions Bank

565 Marriott Drive, Suite 200
Nashville, TN 37214
Jay Roney
(615) 744-6063 • (615) 744-6531 Fax

Wachovia Small Business Capital

100 Office Park Drive, Suite G10
Birmingham, AL 35223
Sam Renta
(205) 982-7900 • (205) 982-7904 Fax

SunTrust Banks, Inc.

201 S. Court Street
Florence, AL 35630
Ann Massey
(256) 767-8600 • (256) 767-8476 Fax

United Bank

1015 Southwest First Street
Summerdale, AL 36580
Nancy Helton
(800) 423-7026 • (251) 446-6076 Fax

Wells Fargo Bank Minnesota N.A.

1455 W. Lake Street, Suite 306
Minneapolis, MN 55408
Tom Burke, Vice President
(612) 667-2753 • (612) 316-2322 Fax

Whitney National Bank

400 Labarre Road, 5th Floor
Jefferson, LA 70121
Wanda Bedoya, Assistant Vice President
(504) 846-2576 • (504) 846-2585 Fax

CommunityExpress Pilot Loan Program

The CommunityExpress Pilot Loan Program provides streamlined business financing and management and technical assistance to small businesses located in distressed or underserved markets. The CommunityExpress program is offered through hundreds of selected SBA lenders throughout the nation. Under Community Express, approved lenders may use streamlined and expedited loan review and approval procedures to process SBA-guaranteed loans. These lenders may

thus use, to the maximum extent possible, their own loan analysis, loan procedures, and loan documentation to process SBA loans to \$250,000. However lenders must provide technical assistance to the borrowers under this program. For more information, go to our website at: www.sba.gov/al and click on the link entitled: UPDATE No Collateral SBA Loans under \$50,000. Community Express lenders offering loans in Alabama are listed below.

Redstone Federal Credit Union (Limit \$50,000)

220 Wynn Drive
Huntsville, AL 35805
(800) 234-1234

Business Loan Express (Limit \$50,000)

415 Beckrich Road, Suite 300
Panama City Beach, FL 32407
(888) 211-2911 • (850) 234-6150 Fax

Innovative Bank (Limit \$50,000)

30 14th Street
Oakland, CA 94612
(888) 960-0700

Superior Financial Group, LLC (Limit \$25,000)

165 Lennon Lane, Suite 101
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
(800) 675-0500

Special Purpose 7(a) Loan Programs

The 7(a) program is the most flexible of SBA's lending programs. The agency has created several variations to the basic 7(a) program to address the particular financing need of certain small businesses. These special purpose programs are not necessarily for all businesses but may be very applicable to some small businesses. They are generally governed by the same rules, regulations, fees, interest rates, etc. as the regular 7(a) loan guaranty. Lenders can advise you of any variations.

CAPLines

This specialized umbrella loan program is designed to help small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working capital needs. The CAPLines can be used to finance seasonal working capital needs; finance the direct costs of performing certain construction, service and supply contracts; finance the direct cost associated with commercial and residential construction performed on a speculative basis (without a firm commitment for purchase); finance operating capital by obtaining advances against existing inventory and accounts receivable; and consolidate short-term debt. SBA provides a 85 percent

guarantee. There are five distinct programs under the CAPLine umbrella:

- **The Contract Loan Program** Is used to finance material and labor needs for a specific contract or contracts. Proceeds can be disbursed before the work begins. If used for one contract, it is generally not revolving; if used for more than one contract at a time, it can be revolving. The loan maturity is usually based on the length of the contract, but no more than five years. Payment from the contract award must be sent directly to the lender.
- **The Seasonal Line of Credit Program** Finances the short-term, seasonal increases of accounts receivable and inventory. The business must have a definite established seasonal pattern and thus must have been in business for a period of 12 months in order to establish that pattern. The loan does not revolve during the season but may be used over again after a "clean-up" period of 30 days. These also may have a maturity of up to five years. The business may not have another seasonal line of credit outstanding but may have other lines for non-seasonal working capital needs.
- **The Builders Line Program** Provides financing for small general contractors involved in residential or commercial construction or building rehabilitation for resale. Loan maturity is generally three years but can be extended up to five years if necessary. Proceeds are used solely for direct expenses of acquisition, immediate construction and/or significant rehabilitation of the residential or commercial structures. The purchase of the land can be included if it does not exceed 20 percent of the loan proceeds. Up to 5 percent of the proceeds can be used for physical improvements that benefit the property.
- **The Small Asset-Based Line** Can be used for revolving lines up to \$200,000 to purchase inventory, pay direct labor or finance accounts receivable and is advanced against existing inventory and/or accounts receivable. Repayment comes from the collection of accounts receivable or sale of inventory, and this line of credit must revolve. It does require periodic servicing and monitoring of the collateral for which service the lender can charge up to two percent annually to the borrower. These lines are generally used by businesses providing credit to their customers.
- **The Standard Asset-Based Line** Is similar to the Small Asset-Based Line, but for loan amounts over \$200,000. It does require stricter servicing and monitoring, and the lender may pass the costs along to the borrower.

EXPORT TRADE FINANCING

Export Working Capital Program www.sba.gov/oit/finance

The SBA's Export Working Capital Program assists lenders in responding to the needs of exporters seeking short-term export working capital. This program enables U.S. exporters to obtain loans that facilitate the export of goods or services. The EWCP supports single transactions or revolving lines. The maximum dollar amount of an export line of credit under this program is \$1.5 million with a 90 percent guaranty. Under certain circumstances the maximum amount of an international trade loan can go up to \$1.75 million. The maximum amount of some export loans can be increased to \$2 million through co-guaranty between the SBA and the Export-Import Bank. Loan maturities are generally for a term of 12 months. The guaranty can be reissued for an additional 12 months through an abbreviated application process. The guaranty fee the SBA charges is 0.25 percent of the guaranteed amount of the loan for the initial 12 months. The Borrower negotiates the interest rate and all other fees with the lender. The program offers flexible terms, low fees and a quick processing time.

Eligibility of Exporter

You must have an operating history of at least one year – not necessarily in exporting.

Eligible Buyers

The foreign buyer must be a creditworthy entity located in an acceptable country.

Use of EWCP Proceeds:

- To acquire inventory for export or to be used to manufacture goods for export.
- To pay the manufacturing costs of goods for export.
- To purchase goods or services for export.
- To support Standby Letters of Credit related to export transactions.
- For pre-shipment working capital directly related to export orders.
- For post-shipment foreign accounts receivable financing.

Ineligible Use of Proceeds

- To support the applicant's domestic sales.
- To acquire fixed assets or capital goods for the applicant's business.
- To support a sale where the exporter is not taking title to the goods.
- To acquire, equip, or rent commercial space overseas.
- To serve as a Warranty Letter of Credit.

Collateral Requirements

- Guaranteed loans must be fully collateralized at all times.

- Collateral for the manufacturing sector typically consists of a first lien on all export-related inventory and export related accounts receivable.
- Collateral for the service sector typically consists of assignment of proceeds of export-related contracts or purchase orders and a first lien on export-related accounts receivable.
- Other collateral may be required.

How to Apply – A small business exporter seeking a guaranteed EWCP loan must apply to a lender.

SBA Ex-Im Bank Co-Guarantee

This is designed to provide small business exporters the ability to obtain larger export working capital loans through the Export Working Capital Program than SBA could support alone. This program enables U.S. exporters to obtain loans that facilitate the export of goods or services. Under this program, the total export working capital line, with a 90 percent guarantee cannot exceed \$2 million. Loan maturities are generally for a term of 12 months. At the end of the 12-month maturity a borrower may reapply for a new guarantee. The guarantee fee SBA

charges is .25 percent of the guaranteed amount of the loan for the initial 12 months. The guarantee fee that Ex-Im Bank charges is .25 percent on the loan amount that is guaranteed by them. The borrower negotiates the interest rate and all other fees with the lender. The co-guarantee offers flexible terms, low fees and a quick processing time.

Eligibility of Exporter

The same as for the SBA EWCP Program.

Eligible Buyers

The foreign buyer must be a creditworthy entity located in an acceptable country in conformity with the Ex-Im Bank's Country Limitation Schedule.

Use of Proceeds

Same as the SBA EWCP.

Ineligible Use of Proceeds

- Goods or services with less than 50 percent US content.
- To support the export of any Defense Articles or Defense Services.
- To support the applicant's domestic sales.



NEED SBA FINANCING?

The **Southern Development Council, Inc.** has over twenty four years of experience in helping Alabama businesses get the SBA financing they need to start a new or expand an existing business.

Please call us today, or visit our website, to find out how we might assist you in obtaining below market, fixed rate financing for your qualifying real estate and equipment purchases.

**Phone Toll Free (800) 499-3034 ext 118,
or visit us at www.sdcinc.org**

- To acquire fixed assets or capital goods for the applicant's business.
- To acquire, equip, or rent commercial space overseas.
- To serve as a Warranty Letter of Credit.

Collateral Requirements

Same as the SBA EWCP.

How to Apply

A small business exporter seeking a co-guaranteed loan must apply to a Lender that is a participant in SBA's 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program. PLP and SBAExpress processing are not permitted. The lender must submit a completed Joint Application for Working Capital Guarantee and loan package to SBA. SBA evaluates and processes the application in accordance with SBA rules for its Export Working Capital program.

International Trade Loan Program

The program helps small businesses engaged or preparing to engage in international trade as well as small businesses adversely affected by competition from imports. This program combines a guarantee for short-term export working capital with a regular term loan. SBA can guarantee up to \$1.75 million, less the amount of SBA's guaranteed portion of other loans outstanding to the borrower under SBA's other financial assistance programs. Loans for facilities and equipment can have maturities of up to 25 years and the guarantee fee and interest rate is the same as for any standard 7(a) loans. Loans for the export working capital portion of the transaction are generally for a term of 12 months and the Borrower negotiates the interest rate and all other fees with the lender. The guaranty fee that SBA charges is the same as the EWCP for a loan of 12 months.

Eligibility of Exporter

- Applicants must meet the same eligibility requirements for a 7(a) loan.
- Applicant must establish the loan will significantly expand or develop an export market, or the applicant has been adversely affected by import competition, and, in addition the applicant must show that upgrading equipment or facilities will improve its competitive position.
- If eligibility is based on entering or expanding export sales, the applicant must submit a one or two page international business plan, including sufficient information to reasonably support the likelihood of expanded export sales.

Use of Proceeds

- For facilities or equipment, including purchasing land and building(s); building new

facilities; renovating, improving, or expanding existing facilities; purchasing or reconditioning machinery, equipment and fixtures; and making other improvements that will be used within the United States for producing goods or services.

- For refinancing of existing debts structured with unreasonable terms. Only debts originally taken out for the purchase of fixed assets may be refinanced.
- Working capital is not an eligible use of proceeds for the International Trade Loan; however, working capital can be included in a companion 7(a) or Export Working Capital Program loan.

Collateral Requirements - Collateral requirements are the same as regular 7(a) loans.

- **How to Apply** - A small business exporter seeking a guaranteed loan must apply to an SBA participating Lender. Call your local SBA District Office for a list of participating lenders.

Export Express

The Export Express program is designed to help SBA meet the export financing needs of small businesses. It is a subprogram of SBA Express and is therefore subject to the same loan processing, making, closing, servicing, and liquidation requirements as well as the same maturity terms, interest rates, and applicable fees as for other SBA loans except as noted below. The total Export Express loan cannot exceed \$250,000. SBA guarantees 85 percent for loans of \$150,000 and under and 75 percent for loans over \$150,000 to \$250,000.

Eligible Buyers - The foreign buyer must be a creditworthy entity located in an acceptable country.

Use of Proceeds

- Finance standby letters of credit used for either bid or performance bonds;
- Finance export development activities such as export marketing and promotional activities, participation in foreign trade shows, translation of product literature for foreign markets, and other activities designed to initiate or expand the applicant's export of its products/services from the U.S.;
- Provide transaction-specific financing for overseas orders;
- Provide revolving lines of credit for export purposes, the term of which must not exceed seven years. In some instances, as a normal course of business, the borrower may use portions of revolving lines of credit for domestic purposes, but no less than 70 percent of the revolver to be used for export related purposes;
- Provide term loans and other financing to enable small business concerns, including small business export trading companies to develop foreign markets; and

- Acquire, construct, renovate, modernize, improve or expand production facilities or equipment to be used in the U.S. in the production of goods or services to be exported from the U.S.

Ineligible Use of Proceeds

Applicants with operations, facilities, or offices overseas, other than those strictly associated with the marketing and/or distribution of products/services exported from the U.S., are not eligible for Export Express or SBAExpress.

How to Apply

The application process is the same for the SBA Express, except the applicant must demonstrate that loan proceeds will enable it to enter a new export market or expand an existing export market. The applicant must submit to the lender a plan that includes projected export sales for the upcoming year as well as the dollar volume of export sales for the previous year.

U.S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC)

U.S. Export Assistance Centers, which consist of SBA staff and the U.S. Department of Commerce in a single location, provide trade promotion and export-finance assistance for small businesses. The USEACs also work closely with other federal, state and local international trade organizations. For more information, contact:

Ray Gibeau

Sunbelt U.S. Export Assistance Center
75 Fifth Street N.W., Suite 1055
Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 897-6089

Community Adjustment and Investment Program

The Community Adjustment & Investment Program helps communities that suffered job losses due to changing trade patterns following the North American Free Trade Agreement. The North American Development Bank has partnered with the SBA and the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and the Treasury to make credit available to businesses in affected communities to help create or retain jobs. Business applicants must be able to demonstrate that the loan or loan guaranty will be used to create or preserve jobs.

Energy and Pollution Control Loan Programs

Two other adaptations of the 7(a) programs resulted in the Energy Loan program for businesses that make, install and service energy savings devices and the Pollution Control Loan

Program for businesses that want to install or operate a pollution control facility.

See www.sba.gov/services, then select "Special Purpose Loans" from the "Financial Assistance" menu along the bottom.

SBA's non-7(a) Loan Programs

In addition to the 7(a) Loan Program SBA has four other non-disaster assistance programs which can help small businesses gain access to capital and bonding.

Certified Development Company Loans (504 Loan Program)

The 504 Loan Program is an economic development program that supports American small business growth and helps communities through business expansion and job creation. This SBA program provides long-term, fixed-rate, subordinate mortgage financing for acquisition and/or renovation of capital assets including land, buildings and equipment. Most for-profit small businesses are eligible for this program. The types of businesses excluded from 7(a) loans (listed previously) are also excluded from the 504 loan program.

The SBA 504 loan is distinguished from the SBA 7(a) loan program in these ways:

- The 504 loan is backed by a 100 percent guaranteed debenture sold to investors.

The maximum debenture is:

- \$1.5 million for businesses that create a certain number of jobs or improve the economy of the locality;
- \$2 million for businesses that meet a specific public policy goal, including veterans; and
- \$4 million for manufacturers.
- Eligible project costs are limited to long-term, fixed assets such as land and building (occupied by the borrower) and substantial machinery and equipment. Working capital is not an eligible use of proceeds.
- Most borrowers are only required to make an injection (borrower contribution) of just 10 percent which allows the business to conserve valuable operating capital. A further injection of 5 percent is needed if the business is a start-up or new (less than 2 years old) and a further injection of 5 percent is also required if the primary collateral will be a single purpose building.
- Two-tiered project financing: a lender finances approximately 50 percent of the project cost and receives a first lien on the project assets (but no SBA guaranty); SBA provides a 100 percent guaranteed debenture that finances up to 40 percent of the project costs secured by a subordinate lien on the project assets. The borrower provides the balance of the project costs.

- Fixed interest rate on SBA loan. SBA guarantees the debenture 100 percent. Debentures are sold in pools monthly to private investors. This low, fixed rate is then passed on to the borrower and establishes the basis for the loan rate. A recent history of debenture rates may be found at www.nadco.org
- All project-related costs can be financed, including acquisition (land and building, land and construction of building, renovations, machinery and equipment) and soft costs, such as title insurance and appraisals. Some closing costs may be financed.
- Collateral is typically a subordinate lien on the assets financed; allows other assets to be free of liens and available to secure other needed financing.
- Long-term; real estate loans are up to 20-year term, heavy equipment 10 or 20-year term and are self-amortizing.
- Loans are provided through Certified Development Companies. CDCs work with banks and other lenders to make loans in first position on reasonable terms, helping lenders retain growing customers and provide Community Redevelopment Act credit.

Businesses that receive 504 loans are:

- Small — net worth under \$7.5 million, net profit after taxes under \$2.5 million, or meet other SBA size standards.
- Organized for-profit.
- Most types of business — retail, service, wholesale or manufacturing.

The SBA's 504 Certified Development Companies serve their communities by financing business expansion needs. Their professional staff works directly with borrowers to tailor a financing package that meets program guidelines and the credit capacity of the borrower's business. For more information, go to www.sba.gov/services, then choose "SBA Loans" from the links in the right-hand column. From there, click on "CDC/504 Program." For more information, contact:

Alabama Community Development Corp.

d/b/a (ALACOM)
Contact: Diane Roehrig, President
117 Southcrest Drive, Suite 100
Homewood, AL 35209
(205) 942-3360 • (205) 942-5984 Fax
alacom@worldnet.att.net
www.alacom.com
Area of Operation: Statewide

Birmingham Citywide Local Development Company

Contact: Bob Dickerson, Executive Director
110 - 12th Street N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 250-6380 • (205) 250-6384 Fax
info@bbrc.biz
www.bbrc.biz
Area of Operation: Statewide

Greater Mobile Development Corporation

Contact: Teresa Sands, Economic Dev. Coord.
Business Innovation Center
1301 Azalea Road, Suite 201
Mobile, AL 36693
(251) 650-0826 • (251) 650-0827 Fax
gmdc@ceebic.org
www.cityofmobile.org
Area of Operation: Statewide

Southern Development Council

8132 Old Federal Road
Montgomery, AL 36117-8007
(334) 244-1801 or (800) 499-3034
(334) 244-1421 Fax
sdci@sdinc.org
www.sdinc.org
Area of Operation: Statewide

Alabama Small Business Capital

Contact: Tamara Y. Lee, Vice-President
400 South Union Street, Suite 395
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 269-3833 • (334) 269-3903 Fax
Area of Operation: Statewide

Microloan Program

The Microloan Program provides small loans ranging from under \$500 to \$35,000. Under this program, the SBA makes funds available to nonprofit intermediaries that, in turn, make the loans directly to entrepreneurs, including veterans. Proceeds can be used for typical business purposes such as working capital, machinery and equipment, inventory and leasehold improvements. Interest rates are negotiated between the borrower and the intermediary.

For more information, go to www.sba.gov/services, then choose "SBA Loans" from the links in the right-hand column. From there, click on "Micro Loans." or contact:

Birmingham Business Resource Center

110 12th Street N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
Robert Dickerson Jr., Executive Director
info@bbrc.biz
www.bbrc.biz
(205) 250-6380 • (205) 250-6384 Fax
Service Area: Jefferson County
Maximum Loan: \$7,500

Community Enterprise Investments, Inc.

302 N. Barcelona Street
Pensacola, FL 32501
Daniel Horvath, Executive Director
Microloan Contact:
Richard Jemison or Percy Goodman
rjemison@ceii-cdc.org; bigdanfla@aol.com;
eljojr@aol.com; ceii2234@aol.com
www.ceii.pensacola.com
rjemison@ceii-cdc.org;
bigdanfla@aol.com; eljojr@aol.com;
ceii2234@aol.com
(850) 595-6234 or (888) 605-2505 Toll Free
(850) 595-6264 Fax
Service Areas: Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour,

Butler, Bullock, Choctaw, Clarke, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Dallas, Escambia, Geneva, Greene, Henry, Houston, Lee, Lowndes, Marengo, Mobile, Monroe, Montgomery, Perry, Pike, Russell, Sumter, Washington and Wilcox counties.

Small Business Investment Company Program

There are a variety of alternatives to bank financing for small businesses, especially business start-ups. The Small Business Investment Company Program fills the gap between the availability of venture capital and the needs of small businesses that are either starting or growing. Licensed and regulated by the SBA, SBICs are privately owned and managed investment firms that make capital available to small businesses through investments or loans. They use their own funds plus funds obtained at favorable rates with SBA guarantees. SBICs are for-profit firms whose incentive is to share in the success of a small business. In addition to equity capital and long-term loans, SBICs provide debt-equity investments and management assistance. The SBIC Program provides funding to all types of manufacturing and service industries. Some investment companies specialize in certain fields, while others seek out small businesses with new products or services because of the strong growth potential. Most, however, consider a wide variety of investment opportunities. For more information contact your nearest SBA office or the Web site at www.sba.gov/, then choose "Financial Assistance" from the menu across the bottom. From there, click on "Equity Capital" and choose "SBA's Investment Program."

FJC Growth Capital Corporation

Frank L. Collazo, General Manager
P.O. Box 1290
Huntsville, AL 35807
(256) 430-3132 • (256) 430-3280 Fax
flc@fjcgrowth.com
Investment Criteria
Investment Size Range
Preferred Min: \$350,000
Preferred Max: \$500,000
Type of Capital Provided: Loans w/Equity
Features
Funding Stage Preference:
Expansion
Later Stage
Industry Preference: Manufacturing, Health/Medical, Communications, Diversified
Geographic Preferences: South, Southeast, Midwest.

Harbinger Mezzanine Partners, L.P.

John Harrison, Contact
One Riverchase Parkway S.
Birmingham, AL 35244
(615) 301-6400 • (615) 301-6401 Fax
slogers@harbert.net
Investment Criteria
Investment Size Range
Preferred Min.: \$0
Preferred Max.: \$0

Hickory Venture Capital Corporation

J. Thomas Noojin, President
301 Washington Stree, N.W., Suite 100
Huntsville, AL 35801
(256) 539-1931 • (256) 539-5130 Fax
accounting@hvcc.com
Investment Criteria
Investment Size Range:
Preferred Min: \$1,000,000
Preferred Max: \$2,000,000
Type of Capital Provided: Equity, Convertible Debt
Funding Stage Preference: Early Stage, Expansion, LBO, MBO
Industry Preference: Healthcare, Security & Crime Prevention, Retail
Geographic Preferences: Mid-Atlantic, South, Southwest

TD Javelin Capital Fund II, L.P.

Lyle Hohnke, Manager
2850 Cahaba Road, Suite 240
Birmingham, AL 35223
(203) 629-8700 • (203) 629-9293 Fax
mmcleish@tullisdickerson.com

Alabama Plan for Linked Deposits

The Alabama Plan for Linked Deposits is a program operated as a division of the Alabama State Treasurer's Office. It allows the State Treasurer to make deposits in state banks on which banks pay 2 percent below the normal interest rate paid to the state for its funds. The reduction in the interest rate paid by the bank must be passed on to the borrowers on loans qualifying for this program. It amounts to a 2 percent subsidy on the borrower's interest rates for two years to help stimulate economic growth in the state. Use of funds - Land, buildings or equipment; repairs and renovations; rent, utilities, insurance or taxes; legal or accounting fees; wages or inventory.

Eligibility - Any person, corporation or partnership engaged in business and headquartered in Alabama, organized for profit, maintaining facilities primarily in Alabama, having no more than 150 employees, having debts equal to or greater than 35 percent of assets, and creating or sustaining job opportunities.

Job creation - One job must be created or sustained for each \$15,000 of loan. Loan

requests above \$250,000 must demonstrate that one job can be created for each \$10,000 of loan.

The Surety Bond Guarantee Program

Although it is not a business loan program, the Surety Bond Guarantee Program is a public-private partnership between the federal government and the surety industry providing small businesses with the bonding assistance necessary for them to compete for government and private contracting opportunities. The guarantee provides the necessary incentive for sureties to bond small businesses that would otherwise be unable to obtain bonding. They typically lack the combination of working capital and a performance track record necessary to secure bonding on a reasonable basis through regular commercial channels.

Through this program, the SBA guarantees bid, payment and performance bonds issued by surety companies for individual contracts of up to \$2 million on behalf of eligible small construction, service, and supply contractors. The SBA reimburses sureties a predetermined percentage of losses sustained if a contractor breaches the terms of the contract.

The SBA has two program options available, the Prior Approval Program (Plan A) and the Preferred Surety Bond Program (Plan B). In the Prior Approval Program, SBA guarantees 90 percent of a surety's paid losses and expenses on bonded contracts up to \$100,000, and on bonds for socially and economically disadvantaged and HubZone contractors and veterans and service-disabled veterans. All other bonds guaranteed in the Plan A Program receive an 80 percent guarantee. Sureties must obtain SBA's prior approval for each bond guarantee issued. Under the PSB Program, SBA guarantees only 70 percent, but sureties may issue, monitor and service bonds without SBA's prior approval.

For more information on the Surety Bond Program, visit SBA's web site at www.sba.gov and choose "Services." From there, select "Financial Assistance" and click on "Surety Bond" or contact one of the following:

Alabama Surety Bonds, Inc.

14 Office Park Center E., Suite 105-A
Birmingham, AL 35223
(205) 871-9399 • (205) 871-9403 Fax

Jinwright-Turner Insurance, Inc.

4216 Carmichael Road
Montgomery, AL 36106
(800) 239-5667 or (334) 272-1200
(334) 277-6114 Fax



QUICK REFERENCE

TO SBA LOAN GUARANTY PROGRAMS

Program	Maximum Loan Amount	Percent of Guaranty	Use of Proceeds	Maturity	Maximum Interest Rates	Guaranty Fees	Who Qualifies
7(a) Loans							
Regular 7(a) And PLP	\$2 million gross (\$1.5 million guaranty)	Maximum guaranty of 75% up to \$1.5 million; 85% if gross loan is \$150,000 or less.	Expansion/renovation; new construction, purchase land or buildings; purchase equipment, fixtures, leasehold improvements; working capital; refinance debt for compelling reasons; seasonal line of credit, inventory	Depends on ability to repay; generally working capital & Machinery & Equipment (not to exceed life of equipment) is 5-10 years; real estate, Construction, up to 25 years.	Loans 7 years or less: max. prime +2.25%; over 7 years: prime +2.75%; under \$50,000, rates can be higher by 2% for loans of \$25,000 or less; and 1% for loans between \$25,000 and \$50,000. Prepayment penalty for loans with maturities of 15 years or more if prepaid during 1st 3 years.	(Fee charged on guaranteed portion of loan only.) Maturity 1 year or less 0.25% guaranty fee; over 1 year: \$150,000 (gross amount) or less = 2%; \$150,001 - \$700,000 = 3.0%; over \$700,000 = 3.5%. 3.75% on guar. portion over \$1 million. Ongoing fee of 0.55%.	Must be for profit & meet SBA size standards: show good character, credit, management, and ability to repay. Must be an eligible type of business.
SBA Express Lender approves loan, no additional paperwork for SBA	\$350,000	50%	May be used for revolving lines of credit (up to 7 year maturity) or for a term loan (same as 7(a)).	See 7(a)	Loans \$50,000 or less prime + 6.5%; \$50,000 + Prime +4.5%.	See 7(a)	See 7(a)
CAPLines Short-term/Revolving Lines of Credit; Seasonal Contract Builders Standard/Small Asset-Based	\$2 million (small asset based limited to \$200,000)	75% if more than \$150,000 85% if total loan is \$150,000 or less	Finance seasonal working capital needs; cost to perform; construction costs, advances against existing inventory and receivables, consolidation of short-term debts	Up to 5 years	Same as 7(a) except the Standard Asset-Based no fee restriction, but fee disclosure to SBA required.	See 7(a)	Existing business See 7(a)
International Trade	\$2 million (Separate working capital loan plus IT loan together may have \$1.75 million combined guaranty.)	75% if more than \$150,000 85% if total loan is \$150,000 or less	IT loan must be used only for the acquisition of long-term, fixed assets or the refinancing of debt for these purposes. Separate working capital loan may be used for working capital needs associated w/international trade.	Up to 25 years.	See 7(a)	See 7(a)	Small businesses (see 7(a) for qualifications) engaged/preparing to engage in international trade/adversely affected by competition from imports
Export Working Capital Program 1 page application, fast turnaround, may apply for prequalification letter.	\$2 million (may be combined with International Trade loan)	90% up to \$1.5 million maximum guaranty	Short-term working capital loans for exporters	Matched single transaction cycle or generally 1 year for line of credit.	No cap	See 7(a)	Small businesses 7(a) for other qualifications, those who need short-term working capital.
Non-7(a) Loans							
Microloans Loans through nonprofit lending organizations; technical assistance also provided	\$35,000 (total loan amount to small business borrower)	Not applicable	Purchase Machinery & Equipment, fixtures, leasehold improvements; finance increased receivables; Working Capital. Cannot be used to repay existing debt.	Shortest term possible, not to exceed 6 years	Negotiable with intermediary	No guaranty fee	Same as 7(a)
504 Loans Provided through Certified Development Companies (CDCs) which are licensed by SBA.	504 loan maximum amount ranges from \$1.5 M to \$4.0 M depending on project.	Project Costs financed by: 504 Loan up to 40% Lender: 50% Equity 10-20%.	Long-term fixed asset loans; Lender (non-guaranteed) financing secured by first lien on project assets. 504 loan provided from SBA 100% guaranteed debenture sold to investors at fixed rate secured by 2nd lien.	504 Loan: 10- or 20-year term. Lender (unguaranteed) financing may have a shorter term.	Fixed rate on 504 Loan est. when debenture backing loan is sold. Declining prepayment penalty for 1/2 of term.	0.5% upfront fee to SBA on both the debenture amount and the first mortgage amount. Ongoing guaranty fee that currently (FY 2007) is 0.018% of principal O/S. On-going fee % does not change during term.	For profit businesses that do not exceed \$7.5 million in tangible net worth and do not have average net income over \$2.5 M for past 2 years.

BUSINESS PREPARATION

Small Business Training Network

How To Get Equipped With Business Intelligence



Throughout its history, the SBA has complemented its financial assistance programs with resources aimed at helping small business owners gain skills required to start, manage and grow a small enterprise.

The nearly 60 publications listed in its Resource Directory for Small Business Management include titles related to business planning, financial management, management and planning, marketing, products/ideas/inventions, personnel management, crime prevention and emerging business.

The publications are now available for downloading from the SBA's Web site at: www.sba.gov/tools. Select "Publications" from the "Library & Resources" menu along the bottom.

SBA Small Business Training Network

The Small Business Training Network is a virtual campus complete with courses and programs to help the small business owner.

The SBTN reaches new markets and trains small business clients in a changing global environment. The on-line classroom features easy-to-use, electronic business courses available 24 hours-a-day. The network provides interactive, easily accessible courses on topics most in demand by small business clients.

The SBTN includes several key components:

- Online courses and resource areas
- SBA online courses
- Library & online research materials
- Access to business counselors

On this site, you can read articles, take courses, or begin researching areas of small business development that interest you. Or, through a SCORE Cyber-Chapter, you can access via e-mail business advice on an issue that you're struggling with today.

Now featured in the network are four new eCommerce resources, designed to help small businesses increasingly influenced by the Internet and other emerging technologies.

The SBTN can be accessed from SBA's Home Page at:

<http://www.sba.gov/services/>, Then choose "Online Training" from the menus across the bottom.

CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES

Partnerships Work

How To Apply For Government Contracts



The federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world. However, small businesses face challenges when trying to win federal contracts. The SBA can help small businesses work through these challenges. Working closely with federal agencies and the nation's leading large contractors, the SBA works to ensure that small businesses obtain a fair share of government contracts and subcontracts. The SBA has a number of programs to help small firms do business with the federal government.

For more information, visit: www.sba.gov/gc

THE PRIME CONTRACTS PROGRAM

Through the Prime Contracts Program, the SBA helps to increase small business' share of government prime contracts. SBA Procurement Center Representatives work to expand contracting opportunities for small businesses. PCRs review contracting strategies and actions, review prime contractors' subcontracting plans, recommend contracting sources, and provide one-to-one counseling

and training to small businesses seeking to do business with the federal government.

Visit the SBA's Office of Government Contracting home page at: www.sba.gov/gc for a listing of PCRs and buying installations nationwide.

The Subcontracting Assistance Program

The Subcontracting Assistance Program promotes maximum use of small businesses by the nation's large prime contractors. The

SBA's Commercial Market Representatives work with large businesses to identify and expand subcontracting opportunities for small businesses. CMRs conduct compliance reviews to ensure that large businesses comply with small business subcontracting requirements. They also provide guidance to assist small businesses in identifying subcontracting opportunities and marketing their products and services to these large contractors.

CMRs work with agencies to ensure subcontracting with small and small, disadvantaged businesses through inclusion of subcontracting evaluation factors and sub-factors.

THE CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY PROGRAM

The Certificate of Competency Program allows a small business to appeal a contracting officer's determination that it is unable to fulfill the requirements of a specific government contract on which it is the apparent successful offeror. The SBA will conduct a detailed review of the firm's technical and financial capabilities to perform on the contract. If the business demonstrates the ability to perform, the SBA issues a Certificate of Competency to the Contracting Officer, requiring award of that contract to the small business.

SMALL BUSINESS SIZE STANDARDS

The Small Business Act states that a small business concern is "one that is independently owned and operated and which is not dominant in its field of operation." The law also states that in determining what constitutes a small business, the definition will vary from

industry to industry to reflect industry differences accurately. The SBA's Small Business Size Regulations (13 CFR Part 121, www.sba.gov/size/index/tableofsize.html) implement the Small Business Act's mandate to the SBA.

The SBA has also established a table of size standards, matched to North American Industry Classification System industries, used to determine eligibility for SBA programs and small business preferences for federal government contracts.

See more at: <http://www.sba.gov/services/>, then click on "Size Standards" under the "Contracting Opportunities" menu across the bottom.

Size Determination

The Size Determination Program, administered by SBA's six government contracting area offices, ensures that only small firms receive contracts and other benefits reserved exclusively for small business. When a firm's claim that it is small is challenged, the SBA determines if the firm does, in fact, meet established SBA size standards. Size determinations may also be made when requested in connection with other federal small business programs.

Additional information is available at the above "Size Standards" site.

SMALL BUSINESS VENDOR DATABASE

As part of the Integrated Acquisition Environment Initiative, the SBA works with the General Services Administration and Department of Defense to provide a database of vendors, including small business. The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) System is the primary gateway vendor and grantee database for the federal government. CCR collects, stores and disseminates data to support agency acquisition and grants missions. Both current and potential federal government vendors and grantees are required to register in CCR to receive federal contracts or grants. Vendors are required to complete a one-time registration to provide basic information relevant to procurement, grant and financial transactions.

Vendors must update or renew their registration at least once a year to maintain an active status. The SBA provides the CCR with authoritative source information regarding certifications under 8(a) Business Development, HUBZone and Small Disadvantaged Business programs and pro-

vides the small business size status against each North American Industry Classification code listed in a registrant's profile.

SBA maintains the Dynamic Small Business Search function of the CCR. Businesses profiled on the DSBS can be searched by NAICS codes, keywords, location, quality certification, bonding level business type, ownership, SBA certification, and by women, minority, veteran and service-disabled veteran ownership. The DSBS serves as a marketing tool for small businesses because the business profiles in the DSBS include information from SBA's files and other available databases plus additional business and marketing information on individual firms.

To search the DSBS for small businesses, click on:

http://dsbs.sba.gov/dsbs/dsp_dsbs.cfm or select the "Dynamic Small Business Search" at the CCR Web site at: <http://www.ccr.gov>.

Registration in the DSBS is through the CCR. For more information on CCR, or to register, click the CCR Web site. Before registering in CCR, go to the top of the Web page and download the handbook which contains data for a successful registration.

Central Contractor Registration (CCR)
www.ccr.gov

Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code

CAGE Code identify contractors doing business with Federal Government.
(888) 227-2423

Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)

Internationally recognized company identifier in electronic data interchange and global electronic commerce transactions.
Required for Federal Government contracting:
(888) 814-1435
www.dnb.com/us

SUB-NET

Prime contractors use SUB-Net to post subcontracting opportunities. Small businesses can review this Web site to identify opportunities in their area(s) of expertise. While the Web site is designed primarily as a place for large businesses to post solicitations and notices, it is also used by federal agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, and even foreign governments for the same purpose.

The Web site has shifted the traditional marketing strategy from the shotgun approach to one that is more focused and sophisticated. Instead of marketing blindly to hundreds of prime contractors, with no cer-

tainty that any given company has a need for their product or service, small businesses can now use their resources (saving time and money) to identify concrete, tangible opportunities and then submit bids/proposals targeting these potential subcontracting opportunities.

SUB-Net is available at the SBA Web site by visiting: <http://web.sba.gov/subnet>

HUBZONE PROGRAM

The Historically Underutilized Business Zone Program stimulates economic development and creates jobs in urban and rural communities by providing federal contracting assistance to small businesses.

The HUBZone program establishes preferences for award of federal contracts to small businesses located in historically underutilized business zones.

In general, small businesses may obtain HUBZone certification by employing staff who live in a HUBZone and maintaining a "principal office" in one of these specially designated areas.

SBA is responsible for:

- Determining whether or not individual concerns are qualified HUBZone small business concerns, and therefore eligible to receive HUBZone contracts;
- Maintaining a list of qualified HUBZone small business concerns for use by acquisition agencies in awarding contracts under the program; and
- Adjudicating protests and appeals of eligibility to receive HUBZone contracts.

To qualify for the program, a business must meet the following criteria:

- It must qualify as a small business by SBA size standards;
- Its principal office must be located within a HUBZone, which includes lands on federally recognized Indian reservations and covered by phrase "Indian Country";
- It must be owned (at least 51 percent) by one or more U.S. citizens, or Community Development Corporation or an agricultural cooperative, or an Indian tribe; and
- At least 35 percent of its employees must reside in a HUBZone.

Existing businesses that choose to move to qualified areas are eligible. To fulfill the requirement that 35 percent of a HUBZone firm's employees reside in the HUBZone, employees must live in a primary residence within that area for at least 180 days or be a currently registered voter in that area.

For additional information regarding the HUBZone Program, please visit:

www.sba.gov/hubzone/

SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM

The SBIR Program encourages small businesses to explore their technological potential by reserving a specific percentage of federal research and development funds for small businesses. The program serves to fund the critical startup and development stages for a technology and encourages commercialization of the technology, product or service. In turn, this stimulates the U.S. economy.

SBIR Requirements:

Small businesses must meet the following eligibility criteria to participate in the SBIR program.

- Be 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens in the U.S. or be a for-profit business concern that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by another for-profit business concern that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are citizens of, or permanent resident aliens in, the U.S.
- Be organized for profit.
- Principal researcher must be employed by small business.

- Company size cannot exceed 500 employees.

For more information on the SBIR Program visit www.sba.gov/services, then scroll down the "Contracting Opportunities" menu along the bottom and click on "Contracting Program." From there, select "SBIR/STTR Programs" from the menu that appears on the right-hand side.

Participating Agencies:

Each year, the following eleven federal departments and agencies are required to reserve a portion of their R&D funds for award to small business: Departments of Agriculture; Commerce; Defense; Education; Energy; Health and Human Services; Homeland Security; Transportation; Environmental Protection Agency; National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and National Science Foundation.

For more information on the SBIR Program, please visit:

www.sba.gov/sbir/indexsbir-sttr.html

SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM

This STTR program reserves a specific percentage of federal R&D funding for award to small business and nonprofit research institution partners. Small business has long been where innovation and innovators thrive. But the risk and expense of conducting serious R&D efforts can be beyond the means of many small businesses. Conversely, nonprofit research laboratories are instrumental in developing high-tech innovations. But frequently, innovation is confined to the theoretical, not the practical. STTR combines the strengths of both entities by introducing entrepreneurial skills to high-tech research efforts. The technologies and products are transferred from the laboratory to the marketplace. The small business profits from the commercialization, which, in turn, stimulates the U.S. economy.

STTR Requirements:

Small businesses must meet the following eligibility criteria to participate in the STTR Program.

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Vice President
Tamara Y. Lee
TODAY!



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Telephone: 334-269-3833
Mobile: 334-221-7070
E-mail: tylee@alabamabiz504.com

400 S. Union Street • Suite 395
Montgomery, AL 36104

- Be 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens in the U.S.
- Be organized for profit.
- Principal researcher need not be employed by small business.
- Small business must conduct at least 40 percent of the work.
- Company size cannot exceed 500 employees. (No size limit for nonprofit research institution).

The nonprofit research institution partner must also meet certain eligibility criteria:

- Be located in the United States and be one of the following:
 - Nonprofit college or university.
 - Domestic nonprofit research organization.
 - Federally funded R&D center.
- The research institution must conduct at least 30 percent of the work.

Participating Agencies:

Each year the following five Federal departments and agencies are required by STTR to reserve a portion of their R&D funds for award to small business/nonprofit research institution partnerships: Department of Defense; Department of Energy; Department of Health and Human Services; National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and National Science Foundation.

Womenbiz

This website is the gateway for women-owned businesses selling to the federal government. It is organized to target the five specific stages that a woman business owner should go through as she explores whether the federal government is the right customer for her. Womenbiz is available at: www.womenbiz.gov.

GSA Schedule

GSA's Federal Supply Schedules, also known as Multiple Award Schedules (MAS), are contracts that allow federal customers to acquire more than 4 million services and products directly from more than 8,600 commercial suppliers. GSA Schedules cover vast array of commercial items - from office supplies and copier paper to systems furniture, from computers to laboratory equipment and services ranging from accounting to graphic design to landscaping. The Southwest Sunbelt Region serves customers in the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee providing work environments, supplies, telecommunications and transportation services to Federal agencies.

This region facilitates the purchase of commercial products and services by other Federal agencies through GSA Schedules and IT con-

tracts; manages a portfolio of Federal facilities including Federal Office Buildings and Courthouses and coordinates the disposal of Federal real property in the states of the Southeast Region and Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and the parts of Maryland and Virginia not served by the National Capital Region. Small and minority businesses that wish to transact commerce with the Federal Government can receive assistance through this office.

General Services Administration (GSA)

77 Forsyth Street, Suite 600
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 331-3200
www.gsa.gov

Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)

John Huffman
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
1409 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, AL 36110
(800) 269-5081

State of Alabama Division of Purchasing

100 N. Union Street, Suite 6
Montgomery, AL 36104

TECH-Net

TECH-Net is an Internet-based database of information containing Small Business Innovation Research awards, Small Business Technology Transfer awards, Advanced Technology Program awards, and Manufacturing Extension Partners centers.

It is a search engine and electronic gateway of technology information and resources for and about small high-tech businesses. It is a tool for researchers, scientists, state, federal and local government officials, a marketing tool for small firms and a potential "link" to investment opportunities for investors and other sources of capital.

TECH-Net is a free service for those seeking small business partners, small business contractors and subcontractors, leading edge technology research, research partners, (e.g. small businesses, universities, federal labs and non-profit organizations), manufacturing centers and investment opportunities.

TECH-Net is available at:

<http://tech-net.sba.gov>

ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESSES 8(A) BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The SBA's Section 8(a) Business Development Program provides various forms of assistance (management and technical assistance, financial assistance, government

contracting assistance and advocacy support) to foster the growth and development of businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. SBA assists these businesses, (during a nine-year tenure in the 8(a) Business Development Program), to gain equal access to the resources necessary to develop their businesses and improve their ability to compete on an equal basis in the mainstream of the American economy.

Business development assistance includes one-to-one counseling, training workshops, and other management and technical guidance required to expand into the federal government contracting arena.

The SBA enters into contracts with other federal agencies and subcontracts the performance of such contracts to 8(a) program participants.

Eligibility Criteria:

To participate in the 8(a) program, a business must be:

- a small business concern
- owned by a U.S. citizen
- at least 51 percent unconditionally owned and operated by an individual(s) who is socially and economically disadvantaged
- established for two full years before applying (or qualifying for a waiver of the two-year rule)

Social disadvantage:

Social disadvantage is defined as individuals who have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias because of their identity as a member of a group without regard to their individual capabilities. The following individuals are presumed to be socially disadvantaged: Black Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans and Subcontinent Asian Americans. An individual who is not a member of one of the groups presumed to be socially disadvantaged must establish individual social disadvantage by a preponderance of the evidence. Anyone may apply for 8(a) Program certification.

For additional information regarding evidence of social disadvantage, please visit:

www.sba.gov/8abd/indexprograms.html

Economic disadvantage:

Economically disadvantaged individuals are socially disadvantaged individuals whose ability to compete in the free-enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities as compared to others in the same or similar line of business who are not socially disadvantaged.

Net worth:

For initial 8(a) Program certification, the net worth of an individual claiming disadvantage, must be less than \$250,000. For continued 8(a) Program eligibility after admission, net worth must be less than \$750,000. In determining such net worth, SBA will exclude the ownership interest in the applicant or participant and the equity in the primary residence.

Day-to-Day Management:

- Management and daily business operations must be controlled by disadvantaged individual(s) upon whom eligibility is based.
- The individual(s) must have management or technical expertise directly related to the primary product or service of the business.

For additional information on the 8(a) Business Development Program, please visit: www.sba.gov/8abd/

Small Disadvantaged Business Certifications

To qualify as a small disadvantaged business, a firm must be owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are socially and economically disadvantaged. Congress has directed that individuals who are members of certain ethnic groups are presumed to be disadvantaged. Other persons, including women and persons of any race, can also qualify by establishing their disadvantaged status.

Once certified by the SBA, the firm can be added to an online registry of SDB-certified firms maintained in CCR/DSBS. Firms remain on the list for three years. Contracting Officers and prime contractors may search this registry for potential contractors.

For additional information on SDB Certification and Eligibility, visit the SDB Web site at: www.sba.gov/services, and select "Small Business Certifications" from the "Contracting Opportunities" menu in the center of the page.

Online 8(a)/SDB Application

The online 8(a)/SDB application allows small companies to apply for 8(a) Business Development and Small Disadvantaged Business certification directly from SBA's Web site. The 8(a)/SDB online application incorporates features including context sensitive help, real-time validation, printer-friendly versions and integrates with the CCR/DSBS.

This is one example of how the SBA utilizes technology such as the Internet to simplify the interaction between small business and the federal government.

You may access the electronic 8(a)/SDB application by visiting:

<https://sba8a.symplicity.com/applicants/guide>

If you are having difficulty with SBA's General Login System (GLS), please contact ITSecurity@sba.gov.

If you are having difficulty with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), please go to <http://www.ccr.gov/help.asp> for contact information.

If you are having difficulty with the Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS), please contact Robert.Connolly@sba.gov.

Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) E-application, please contact SDB@sba.gov.

8(a) Business Development E-application, please contact 8ABD@sba.gov.

The Mentor-Protégé Program for 8(a) Participants

Through the SBA's Mentor-Protégé Program, 8(a) Program participants can receive in-depth business advice to assist them in becoming more competitive in obtaining federal government contracts. The SBA's Mentor-Protégé Program encourages private-sector relationships and broadens the agency's efforts to address the needs of clients in the 8(a) Program.

If you are an 8(a) participant, mentors can provide you with technical and management assistance, financial assistance in the form of equity investments or loans, subcontract support, and assistance in performing prime contracts through joint-venture arrangements with 8(a) businesses.

For additional information, please visit: www.sba.gov/8abd/mentoroverview.html

Management and Technical Assistance

SBA's Section 7(j) Management and Technical Assistance Program authorizes the SBA to enter into grants, cooperative agreements and contracts with public or private organizations to pay all or part of the cost of technical or management assistance for individuals or concerns eligible for assistance under sections: 7(a) (11), 7(j) (10), or 8(a) of the Small Business Act. Specifically, the following are eligible to receive management and technical assistance including businesses which qualify as small under 13CFR part 121 of this title: concerns located in urban or rural areas with high proportions of unemployed or low-income individuals, or which are owned by such low-income individuals; and businesses eligible to receive 8(a) contracts.

The types of assistance available to eligible individuals through the Management and Technical Assistance Program include counseling and training in the areas of:

- Finance
- Management
- Accounting
- Bookkeeping
- Marketing and presentation analysis
- Advertising
- Loan packaging
- Proposal bid preparation
- Feasibility studies
- Industry specific technical assistance
- The identification and development of new business opportunities

More information is at:

www.sba.gov/8abd/indexgrantinfo.html

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business

In 1999 public law established federal procurement opportunities for veterans and service-disabled veterans. In 2003, the Small Business Act established procurement vehicles for small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans.

Contracting officers may award a sole-source or set-aside contract to a small business owned by a service-disabled veteran if:

- The business is a responsible contractor able to perform the contract, and the contracting officer does not reasonably expect two or more small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans will submit offers.
- The anticipated award price of the contract (including options) won't exceed-
- \$5 million in case of a contract opportunity assigned a North American Industry Classification System code for manufacturing; or
- \$3 million in the case of any other contract opportunity;
- In the estimation of the contracting officer, the contract award can be made at a fair and reasonable price.

Additionally, a contracting officer may award contracts after competition restricted to small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans if the contracting officer reasonably expects two or more small businesses owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans will submit offers and that the award can be made at a fair market price.

Veterans and service-disabled veterans participate in all SBA procurement programs. To determine your eligibility, contact your local veterans business development officer in your nearest SBA district office, visit the various program Web sites or contact the SBA's Office of Veterans Business development at www.sba.gov/vets.

For more information about SBA's Service-Disabled Veterans Business program, visit www.sba.gov/VETS/index.html

Disaster Assistance

Knowing the Types of Assistance Available for Recovery



The SBA's Disaster Assistance Program is the only federal program providing loan assistance to homeowners, renters and businesses following disasters. The program provides eligible applicants with certain financial assistance only after an affected area is declared a disaster by the President or the Administrator of the SBA. This loan program is intended for funding of private-sector, non-agricultural losses for which the victims are uninsured or underinsured.

Eligibility is determined by review of a business' or an individual's financial situation as reviewed against established SBA guidelines. A low interest rate (not to exceed 4 percent) is available to applicants without credit available elsewhere; a higher rate (not to exceed 8 percent) is available to applicants with credit available elsewhere.

There are several types of assistance available to qualified applicants.

Physical Disaster

Loans are available to businesses and homeowners and renters. Loans are available to qualified business applicants of any size for uninsured or underinsured disaster losses of up to \$1.5 million. Businesses may use these funds to replace or repair real estate, equipment, fixtures, inventory, and leasehold improvements to pre-disaster condition. Homeowners receive loans, up to \$200,000 for real property losses to repair or restore a primary residence to pre-disaster condition. Homes which are not primary residences are ineligible. Qualified renters and homeowners

may also obtain loans for uninsured or underinsured personal property losses up to \$40,000 to repair or replace personal property such as clothing, furniture, cars, etc. Loans are not intended to replace extraordinarily expensive or irreplaceable items such as antiques, pleasure craft, recreational vehicles or fur coats.

Economic Injury

Loans are loans of up to \$1.5 million for small businesses only which sustain economic injury as a direct result of the disaster event. These working capital loans are intended to be made to small businesses, without credit elsewhere, to help pay ordinary and necessary operating expenses that would have been payable barring the disaster event. Businesses may receive combined EIDL and physical disaster loans up to \$ 1.5 million, unless the business meets the federal criteria as a major source of employment. In that event, the \$1.5 million may be waived when appropriate application is made and documentation provided.

Military Reservist Economic Injury

During Title 10 activations, loans are available to \$1.5 million to assist eligible small businesses to meet their ordinary and necessary operating expenses that they could have met, but are unable to meet, because an essential employee, including the owner, was "called up" to active duty in his/her role as a military reservist. These loans are intended to provide only the amount of working capital needed by a small business to pay its necessary obligations as they mature until operations return to normal after the essential employee is released from active military duty.

More information is at:

<http://www.sba.gov/services>, then choose from the topics under "Disaster Assistance" at the center of the page.



There may be strength in numbers, but there's power in diversity.

In today's competitive business world, a strong, diversified network is not just an advantage, it is a necessity. Our Supplier Diversity Program opens doors, provides opportunity and builds lasting business relationships with minority, female-owned, and small suppliers. This teamwork helps keep us running smoothly and benefits everyone involved. Working together.

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Watching Out For You

The SBA Is Your Voice In Washington



OFFICE OF ADVOCACY

The SBA's Office of Advocacy, the "small business watchdog" of the government, examines the role and status of small business in the economy and independently represents the views of small business to federal agencies, Congress, the President and federal appellate courts as *amicus curiae*. Advocacy compiles and interprets statistics on small business and is the primary entity within the federal government to disseminate small business data.

Advocacy also funds outside research into small business issues and produces numerous publications to inform policy makers about the important role of small business in the economy and the impact of government policies on small business. In addition, the office

monitors federal agency compliance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act – the law that requires agencies to analyze the impact of their proposed regulations on small entities (including small businesses, small governmental jurisdictions and small nonprofit organizations), and consider regulatory alternatives that minimize the economic burden on small entities.

Advocacy's mission is enhanced by a team of regional advocates, located in the SBA's 10 regions. They are Advocacy's direct link to small business owners, state and local government entities, and organizations that support the interests of small entities. The regional advocates help identify regulatory concerns of small business by monitoring the impact of federal and state policies at the grassroots level. Finally, the office is headed by the Chief

Counsel for Advocacy who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Learn more about the Office of Advocacy at: www.sba.gov/services, then select "Small Business Advocacy" from the "Laws & Regulations" column at the bottom.

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN

If excessive fines, penalties or unfair regulatory enforcement by federal agencies are problems for your small business, you have a voice in Washington, D.C., through the Office of the National Ombudsman.

The National Ombudsman receives comments from small business owners, nonprofit organizations and small government entities. Comments are forwarded to federal agencies for review, and in some cases fines may be lowered or eliminated and decisions changed in favor of the small business owner. Each year the National Ombudsman files a report with the U.S. Congress on how federal agencies have treated small businesses.

To request help, send the National Ombudsman a completed Federal Agency Comment Form. You may do this by fax at (202) 481-5719, online at the Ombudsman's Web page: www.sba.gov/services, then select "National Ombudsman" from the "Laws & Regulations" column at the bottom, or by mail at: 409 Third Street S.W., Mail Code 2120, Washington, DC 20416.

The Ombudsman also coordinates 10 regional regulatory fairness boards which meet regularly to receive comments about federal regulations affecting small businesses.

Learn more about the National Ombudsman from the Web site above or call (888) REG-FAIR.

OTHER ASSISTANCE [In Your Area]

Other Sources of Assistance

International Trade Resources

Department of Commerce International Trade Division

950 22nd Street N., Suite 707
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 731-1331 • (205) 731-0076 Fax
www.buyUSA.com/alabama

Alabama International Trade Center (AITC)

The University of Alabama
Brian Davis, Director
P.O. Box 870396
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0396
(205) 348-7621 • (205) 348-6974 Fax
aitc@ua.edu
www.aitc.ua.edu

Sunbelt U.S. Export Assistance Center

Ray Gibeau
Regional Manager, International Trade
Programs
75 Fifth Street N.W., Suite 1055
Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 897-6089 • (404) 897-6085 Fax
raymond.gibeau@sba.gov

Export Legal Assistance Network (ELAN)

www.export-legal-assistance.org/
Get the answers to your export legal questions from the Export Legal Assistance Network (ELAN). Exports can mean big profits for a small business. But when you're just starting out, tariffs, regulatory requirements, distributorship agreements and other legal matters can be a little intimidating. The Export Legal Assistance Network program can help you over these first hurdles.

Export Import Bank

811 Vermont Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20571
(202) 565-3200 • (202) 565-3210 Fax

Foreign Trade Zones

www.foreign-trade-zone.com

Birmingham Foreign Trade Zone #98

Office of Economic Development
710 20th Street N., 3rd Floor, City Hall
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 254-2609
www.informationbirmingham.com

Huntsville Foreign Trade Zone #83

Huntsville-Madison County
Airport Authority
2850 Wall Triana Highway, Suite 301
Huntsville, AL 35824
(256) 772-3105 • (256) 772-3106 Fax

Mobile Foreign Trade Zone #82

2062 Old Shell Road
Mobile, AL 36607
(251) 471-6725 • (251) 471-6727 Fax

Anniston Foreign Trade Zone #211

c/o Foreign Trade Zone Corporation
P.O. Box 6241
Huntsville, AL 35824-0241
(256) 772-3105 Huntsville

Montgomery Foreign Trade Zone #222

Montgomery Area CoC
P.O. Box 79
Montgomery, AL 36101
(334) 834-5200

U.S. Customs

www.customs.gov

Port Director

U.S. Customs Service
P.O. Box 320127
Birmingham, AL 35212
(205) 731-1464 • (205) 731-8192 Fax

Port Director

U.S. Customs Service
P.O. Box 6085
Huntsville, AL 35824
(256) 772-3404 • (256) 772-3404 Fax

Port Director

U.S. Customs Service
P.O. Box 2748
Mobile, AL 36652
(251) 441-5106 • (251) 441-6061 Fax

Other Resources

State of Alabama Division of Purchasing

RSA Union Building
100 North Union Street, Suite 192
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 242-7250

Consumer Response Center

Federal Trade Commission
Consumer Response Center
600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Rm H-130
Washington, DC 20580
(202) 382-4357 • (202) 362-2012 Fax

Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc.

1411 K Street N.W., 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3404
<http://www.bbb.org>

Chief Postal Inspector

ISOSG
222 S. Riverdale Plaza, Suite 1250
Chicago, IL 60606
www.usps.com/websites/depart/inspect/

Drug Free Workplace

dandrew@inetdirect.net
www.drugfreeworkplace.com

Tree Planting Information

Neil Letson, State Urban Forestry Coord.
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
P.O. Box 302550
Montgomery, AL 36130-2550
(334) 240-9360
www.aces.edu/ucf
nletson@aces.edu

Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association

James Harwell, Executive Director
P.O. Box 9
Auburn, AL 36831
(334) 821-5148 • (334) 821-9111 Fax
www.alna.org

Alabama Urban Forestry Association

(205) 226-7760 or
(877) 548-0440 Toll Free
(205) 226-3046 Fax
www.info@aufa.com

Alabama Forestry Commission

P.O. Box 302550
Montgomery, AL 36130
(334) 240-9300 • (334) 240-9390 Fax
(800) 436-8568 TTY
www.forestry.state.al.us

General Contractors

License Board
2525 Fairlane Drive
Montgomery, AL 36116
(334) 272-5030 • (334) 395-5336 Fax
www.genconbd.state.al.us

Bureau of Indian Affairs

1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20245
(202) 208-3711

National Association of Self-Employed (NASE)

P.O. Box 612067, DFW Airport
Dallas, TX 75261-2067
(800) 232-6273
www.nase.org

Bishop State Community College

Small Business Institute for Safety
and Health Training
351 N. Broad Street
Mobile, AL 36603-5898
(251) 690-6801
www.bishop.edu
The Institute assists small businesses in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. This program was designed to provide site-specific guidance to employers with fewer than 250 employees.

State Health Planning and Development Agency

P.O. Box 303025
Montgomery, AL 36130-3025
(334) 242-4103 • (334) 242-4113 Fax
www.shpda.state.al.us
To establish a nursing home, a Certificate of Need must be obtained.

Alabama Department of Public Health

201 Monroe Street, Suite 1552
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 206-5200
www.adph.org

State of Alabama Division of Purchasing

100 N. Union Street, Suite 6
Montgomery, AL 36104

Division of Enforcement

Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20580
(202) 326-2222 • (202) 326-3197 Fax
www.ftc.gov/bcp/m
To receive a 5-digit Registration Number (RN) for labels for textile manufacturing.

Alabama Bar Association

415 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 269-1515 • (334) 261-6310 Fax
www.alabar.org
If you need assistance in obtaining an attorney.

For companies to qualify to accept credit cards contact:

Visa/Mastercard – Bank of Account
American Express (800) 445-2639
Discover Card (800) 347-6673

For American with Disabilities Act documents and general info

(800) 514-0301
(800) 514-0383
(or for TDD access, use your local relay service)
www.ada.gov

National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)

Alabama State Dir.: Rosemary Elebash
7550 Halycom Summit Drive
Montgomery, AL 36117
(334) 264-2261
www.nfib.com

Regional Planning Commissions

The Regional Planning Com-missions operate a revolving loan fund (RLF) for the purpose of assisting small business and industries in their start-up and expansion activities. The goal of the program is to create new jobs for citizens of Alabama. The RLF provides gap financing that is not available from commercial lenders. For more information, contact one of the following:

AL Association of Regional Councils

Leigh Moore-Jones, State Director
5900 Carmichael Place
Montgomery, AL 36117
(334) 277-2221 • (334) 277-3899 Fax
www.alarc.org

Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission

John Clyde Riggs, Director
107 Broad Street
Camden, AL 36726
(334) 682-4234 • (334) 682-4205 Fax

OTHER ASSISTANCE [In Your Area]

Birmingham Regional Planning Commission

2112 11th Avenue S.
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 251-8139

Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Bill Tucker, Executive Director
125 Washington Avenue, Third Floor
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 262-4300 • (334) 262-6976 Fax

East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Bill Curtis, Executive Director
1130 Quintard Avenue, Suite 300
P.O. Box 2186
Anniston, AL 36202
(800) 239-6741 or (256) 237-6741
(256) 237-6763 Fax

Lee/Russell Council of Governments

Suzanne G. Burnette, Executive Director
2207 Gateway Drive
Opelika, AL 36801
(334) 749-5264 • (334) 749-6582 Fax

North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments

C. Ron Matthews, Executive Director
P.O. Box C
Decatur, AL 35602
(256) 355-4515 • (256) 351-1380 Fax

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Keith Jones, Executive Director
P.O. Box 2603
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662
(256) 389-0555 • (256) 389-0599 Fax

South Alabama Regional Planning Commission

Russ Wimberly, Director
110 Beauregard Street/P.O. Box 1665
Mobile, AL 36602
(251) 433-6541 • (251) 433-6009 Fax

South Central Alabama Development Commission

Tyson Howard, Executive Director
5900 Carmichael Place
Montgomery, AL 36117
(334) 244-6903 • (334) 270-0038 Fax
thoward@adss.state.al.us

Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Thomas B. Solomon, Executive Director
P.O. Box 1406
Dothan, AL 36302
(334) 794-4093 • (334) 794-3288 Fax

Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments

Bob Culver, Executive Director
5075 Research Drive
Huntsville, AL 35805
(256) 830-0818 • (256) 830-0843 Fax

West Alabama Planning and Development Council

Robert B. Lake, Executive Director
4200 Highway 69 N., Suite 1
Northport, AL 35473
(205) 333-2990 • (205) 333-2713 Fax

Small Business Incubators

Small business incubators, which provide comprehensive support to companies in their start-up stages, help entrepreneurs achieve their dreams and help communities develop more vibrant economies. The incubation process begins with an analysis of what a company needs and ends with that company "graduating" to become solid and independent. In between, the company receives tailor-made services that point it toward success. For additional information, contact one of the following:

Auburn Center for Developing Industries

Peggy Hinson, Manager
1500 Pumphrey Avenue
Auburn, AL 36832
(334) 501-7300
phinson@auburnalabama.org

Bessemer Business Center

Devron Veasley, Director
1020 9th Avenue S.W.
Bessemer, AL 35022
(205) 481-2000 • (205) 481-2100 Fax
e-mail: dveasley@mindspring.com
www.bessemeral.org/BBIS.html

Bessemer Business Incubation Center

The Downtown Entrepreneurial Center
Devron Veasley, Director
401 19th Street N.
Bessemer, AL 35020
(205) 481-4800 • (205) 481-4801 Fax
dveasley@mindspring.com
www.bessemeral.org/BBIS.html

Bevill State Community College

Jasper Campus
Kim Ennis
1411 Indiana Avenue
Jasper, AL 35501
(205) 387-0511 • (205) 387-5191 Fax
rgreen@bscc.edu

Business Innovation Center

Lynn Stacey, Executive Director
1301 Azalea Road
Mobile, AL 36693
(251) 660-7002 • (251) 660-7004 Fax
ceebic@ceebic.org
www.ceebic.org

Biztech Business Technology Dev. Center, Inc.

Dick Reeves, President
515 Sparkman Drive
Huntsville, AL 35816
(256) 704-6000 • (256) 704-6002 Fax
info@biztech.org
www.biztech.org

Decatur Business Incubator

Michelle Jordan, Department Head
1629 4th Avenue S.W.
Decatur, AL 35601
(256) 351-7563 • (256) 351-7984 Fax

Entrepreneurial Center

Susan Matlock, President
110 12th Street N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 250-8000 • (205) 250-8013 Fax
smatlock@entrepreneurialctr.com
www.entrepreneurialctr.com

Montgomery Area Small Business Incubator

Douglas Jones, Director
600 S. Court Street
Montgomery, AL 36101
(334) 832-4790 • (334) 240-6869 Fax
djones@montgomerychamber.com
www.montgomeryincubator.org

Northeast Alabama Entrepreneurial System

Giles McDaniel, Executive Director
1400 Commerce Boulevard, Suite 1
Anniston, AL 36207
(256) 831-5215 • (256) 831-8728 Fax
giles@neaes.org
www.neaes.org

Office for the Advancement of Developing Industries

Susan Matlock, Executive Director
2800 Milan Court, Suite 100
Birmingham, AL 35211-6908
(205) 943-6560 • (205) 943-6563 Fax
smatlock@entrepreneurialctr.com
www.uab.edu/oadi

Ozark Technology Center (OTC)

Robin Beasley, Assistant Economic Director
3269 U.S. Highway 231 S.
Ozark, AL 36360
(334) 774-4952 • (334) 774-4539 Fax
otcdirector@ozarkalabama.org
www.ozarkalabama.org

Shoals Commercial Culinary Center

Sherry Campbell, Director
610 W. College Street
Florence, AL 35630
(256) 764-0044 • (256) 764-5999 Fax
scampbell@shoalsec.com
http://www.shoalsec.com

Shoals Entrepreneurial Center (SEC)

Giles McDaniel, Executive Director
3115 Northington Court
Florence, AL 35630
(256) 760-9014 • (256) 740-5530 Fax
jdavis@shoalsec.com
www.shoalsec.com

Shoals Entrepreneurial Center - Sheffield

Giles McDaniel, Director
501 Little Rock Avenue
Sheffield, AL 35660
(256) 314-1750 • (256) 314-1751 Fax
jdavis@shoalsec.com
www.shoalsec.com

The Innovation Centre, Inc.

George Alford, Director
4344 Alabama Highway 41
Selma, AL 36701
(334) 418-0005 • (334) 418-0010 Fax
galford@alfordandassoc.com

Baldwin County Incubator

Bob Higgins, Director
P.O. Box 1340
Robertsdale, AL 36567
(251) 947-2445 or (800) 947-2445
(251) 947-4229 Fax
info@baldwinincubator.com
www.baldwinincubator.com

State Resources

Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)

Bill Johnson, Director
Center for Commerce Building
401 Adams Avenue, Suite 580/
P.O. Box 5690
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690
(334) 242-5591 • (334) 242-5099 Fax
office.of.the.director@adeca.state.al.us
www.adeca.state.al.us

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Onis "Trey" Glenn III, Director
1400 Coliseum Boulevard (36110-2059)
P.O. Box 301463
Montgomery, AL 36130-1463
(334) 271-7700 • (334) 271-7950 Fax
www.adem.state.al.us

Alabama State Employment Service

Industrial Relations Building
649 Monroe Street, Room 2813
Montgomery, AL 36131
(334) 242-8003 • (334) 242-8012 Fax
www.es.dir.alabama.gov

Alabama Information Technology

Byron McCain, Executive Director
P.O. Box 130220
Birmingham, AL 35213
(205) 802-7551 • (205) 802-7553 Fax
byron.mccain@alabama-infotech.org
www.alabama-infotech.org

OTHER ASSISTANCE [In Your Area]

Better Business Bureau

P.O. Box 55268
Birmingham, AL 35255-5268
(205) 558-2222 • (205) 558-2239 Fax
info@birmingham-al.bbb.org
http://www.birmingham-al.bbb.org
Serving Central Alabama & the
Wiregrass Area

Better Business Bureau

500 12th Street (31901)/P.O. Box 2587
Columbus, GA 31902-2587
(706) 324-0712 • (706) 324-2181 Fax
info@columbus-ga.bbb.org
http://www.columbus-ga.bbb.org
Serving West Georgia, East Alabama and
Southwest Georgia.

Better Business Bureau

Dothan Branch Office
118 Woodburn
Dothan, AL 36305
(334) 794-0492 • (334) 794-0659 Fax
www.birmingham-al.bbb.org

Better Business Bureau

P.O. Box 383
Huntsville, AL 35804-0388
(256) 533-1640 • (256) 533-1177 Fax
info@northalabama.bbb.org
http://www.northalabama.bbb.org/
Serving Northern Alabama

Better Business Bureau

3361 E. Cottage Hill Road
Mobile, AL 36606
P.O. Box 91419
Mobile, AL 36691-1419
info@bbbsouthal.org
(251) 433-5494 • (251) 438-3191 Fax
http://www.bbbsouthal.org
Serving Southern Alabama

Better Business Bureau

Montgomery Branch Office
500 Eastern Boulevard, Suite 128
Montgomery, AL 36117
(334) 273-5530 • (334) 273-5546 Fax
www.bbb.org

Consumer Affairs

Consumer Protection

(800) 392-5658

Office of Consumer Affairs Division

(334) 242-7334
Minority Resources

Birmingham Business Resource Center (BBRC)

110 12th Street N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 250-6380 • (205) 250-6384 Fax
info@bbrc.biz
www.bbrc.biz

Central Alabama African American Chamber of Commerce

2324 Second Avenue N., Suite 100
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 323-1877

North Alabama African American Chamber of Commerce

225 E. Spragins Street
Huntsville, AL 35801
(256) 564-7574 • (256) 564-7344 Fax
www.thenaacc.org

Urban League of Birmingham

1229 3rd Avenue N.
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 326-0162 • (205) 521-6951 Fax
burbanleag@aol.com
www.birminghamurbanleague.net

Alabama Department of Transportation

John Huffman, Coordinator
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
1409 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, AL 36130-3050
(334) 242-6534 • (334) 263-7586 Fax
thomasc@dot.state.al.us
www.dot.state.al.us/

Alabama Indian Affairs Commission

Eloise Josey, Executive Director
777 Lawrence Street, Suite 102
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 242-2831 • (334) 240-3408 Fax
aiac@mindspring.com
www.aiac.state.al.us

Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE) State of Alabama

David Barley, Supervisor
401 Adams Avenue/P.O. Box 5690
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690
(800) 447-4191 • (334) 242-4203 Fax
www.adeca.state.al.us

South Regions Minority Business Council

Scott Vowels, Executive Director
4715 Alton Court
Birmingham, AL 35210
(205) 957-1882 or (205) 957-1883
(205) 957-2114 Fax
info@srmbc.org
www.srmbc.org

Chambers of Commerce

Chambers of Commerce serve as a central
location where the local small business
community may obtain information, pub-
lications and contact information. For
more information check listing of area
Chambers or visit: www.chamberofcom-
merce.com.

Abbeville CoC

P.O. Box 202
Abbeville, AL 36310-0202
(334) 585-2273

Alabama Gulf Coast Area CoC

P.O. Drawer 3869
Gulf Shores, AL 36547
(251) 968-6904 • (251) 968-5332 Fax
mberson@gulftel.com
www.alagulfcoastchamber.com

Albertville CoC

316 E. Sand Mountain Drive/
P.O. Box 1457
Albertville, AL 35950
(256) 878-3821 • (256) 878-3822 Fax
Albertvillechamber@charter.net

Alexander City/Lake Martin Area CoC

120 Tallapoosa Street/P.O. Box 926
Alexander City, AL 35011
(256) 234-3461 • (256) 234-0094 Fax
www.alexandercity.org

Aliceville Area CoC

P.O. Drawer A
Aliceville, AL 35442
(205) 373-2820 • (205) 373-8692 Fax
commerce@pickens.net
www.pickens.net/commerce

Andalusia Area CoC

P.O. Box 667
Andalusia, AL 36420-0667
(334) 222-2030 • (334) 222-7844 Fax
dreeves@andalusiachamber.com

Arab CoC

P.O. Box 626
Arab, AL 35016
(256) 586-3138 • (256) 586-0233 Fax
arabchamber@charter.net
www.arabalabama.org

Ashford Area CoC

P.O. Box 463
Ashford, AL 36312
(334) 899-4769 • (334) 899-3033 Fax

Greater Limestone County CoC

P.O. Box 150
Athens, AL 35612
(256) 232-2600 • (256) 232-2609 Fax
alcc@pclngt.net
www.tourathens.com

Atmore CoC

501 S. Pensacola Avenue
Atmore, AL 36502-2953
(251) 368-3305 • (251) 368-0800 Fax
atmoreal@frontiernet.net
www.atmorechamber.com

Auburn CoC

P.O. Box 1370
Auburn, AL 36831-1370
(334) 887-7011 • (334) 821-5500 Fax
www.auburnchamber.com
info@auburnchamber.com

Bayou La Batre CoC

P.O. Box 486
Bayou La Batre, AL 36509
(251) 824-4088 • (251) 824-4133 Fax
www.gulfinfo.com/bayoulabatre

Bessemer Area CoC

321 N. 18th Street(35020)/P.O. Box 648
Bessemer, AL 35021
(205) 425-3253 • (205) 425-4979 Fax
mmilan1@bellsouth.net
www.bessemerchamber.com

Bibb County CoC

P.O. Box 25
Centreville, AL 35042
(205) 324-5222 • (205) 926-5221 Fax
bibbco@dbtech.net
www.bibbco@dbtech.net

Birmingham Regional CoC

505 20th Street N., 2nd Floor
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 324-2100 • (205) 324-2560 Fax
www.birminghamchamber.com

Blount County/Oneonta CoC

227 2nd Avenue E.
Oneonta, AL 35121-1487
(205) 274-2153 • (205) 274-2099 Fax
www.blountoneontachamber.org

Boaz CoC

P.O. Box 563
Boaz, AL 35957
(256) 593-8154 • (256) 593-1233 Fax
www.boazchamberofcommerce.com

Brewton CoC

101 B Douglas Avenue
Brewton, AL 36426
(251) 867-3224 • (251) 809-1793 Fax
www.brewtonchamber.com

Calera CoC

Highway 31/P.O. Box 445
Calera, AL 35404
(205) 668-3023 • (205) 668-3023 Fax
e-mail: info@calerachamber.org
www.calerachamber.org

Calhoun County CoC

P.O. Box 1087
Anniston, AL 36202-1087
(256) 237-3536 • (256) 237-0126 Fax
www.calhounchamber.com

Central Baldwin CoC

P.O. Box 587
Robertsdale, AL 36567
(251) 947-5932 • (251) 947-2626 Fax
cbchamber@gulftel.com
www.cbchamber.org

The CoC of Walker County

204 19th Street E., Suite 101
Jasper, AL 35501
(205) 384-4571 • (205) 384-4901 Fax
walkcham@sonet.net
www.walkerchamber.us

CoC of West AL

2200 University Boulevard
Tuscaloosa, AL 35402
(205) 758-7588 • (205) 391-0565 Fax
www.tuscaloosachamber.com

OTHER ASSISTANCE [In Your Area]

Cherokee County CoC

P.O. Box 86
Centre, AL 35960
(256) 927-8455 • (256) 927-2768 Fax
www.cherokee-chamber.org

Chickasaw CoC

P.O. Box 11421
Chickasaw, AL 36671
(251) 456-4751
www.ci.chickasaw.al.us/content/commerce

Childersburg CoC

805 3rd Street, S.W./P.O. Box 527
Childersburg, AL 35044
(256) 378-5482 • (256) 378-5833 Fax
chamber1540@aol.com
www.childersburg.com

Chilton County CoC

500 5th Avenue N./P.O. Box 66
Clanton, AL 35046-0066
(205) 755-2400 • (205) 755-8444 Fax
info@chiltoncountychamber.com
www.chiltoncountychamber.com

Citronelle Area CoC

8175 State Street
Citronelle, AL 36522
(251) 866-7733 • (251) 866-7982 Fax
info@citronellechamber.com
www.citronellechamber.com

Clay County CoC

P.O. Box 85
Lineville, AL 36266
(256) 396-2828 • (256) 396-5532 Fax
www.claycochamber.com

Cleburne County CoC

P.O. Box 413
Heflin, AL 36264
(256) 463-2222 • (256) 463-3982 Fax
Aberry@nti.net

Luverne/Crenshaw County CoC

P.O. Box 12
Luverne, AL 36049
(334) 335-3404 • (334) 335-3820 Fax
www.crenshawchamber.org

Cullman Area CoC

P.O. Box 1104
Cullman, AL 35056-1104
(256) 734-0454 • (256) 737-7443 Fax
www.cullmanchamber.org
cullman@corrcomm.net

Dadeville Area CoC

185 S. Tallassee Street, Suite 103
Dadeville, AL 36853
(256) 825-4019 • (256) 825-0547 Fax
www.dadeville.com

Daleville CoC

P.O. Box 688
Daleville, AL 36322
(334) 598-6331 • (334) 598-2333 Fax
www.dalevilleal.com

Decatur Morgan County CoC

515 6th Avenue N.E.
Decatur, AL 35602-2003
(256) 353-5312 • (256) 353-2384 Fax
www.dcc.org

Demopolis Area CoC

102 E. Washington Street/P.O. Box 667
Demopolis, AL 36762
(334) 289-0270 • (334) 289-1382 Fax
www.demopolischamber.com

Dothan Area CoC

102 Jamestown Boulevard/P.O. Box 638
Dothan, AL 36302
(334) 792-5138 or (800) 221-1027
(334) 794-4796 Fax
www.dothan.com

East Walker County CoC

P.O. Box 188
Sumiton, AL 35148
(205) 255-0202
cheevee@bellsouth.net

Eastern Shore CoC

327 Fairhope Avenue
Fairhope, AL 36532-2317
(251) 928-6387 • (251) 928-6389 Fax
www.eschamber.com

Elba CoC

200 Buford Street
Elba, AL 36323
(334) 897-3125 • (334) 897-1762 Fax
elbaalabama.net
www.ecc@alaweb.com

Enterprise CoC

P.O. Box 310577
Enterprise, AL 36331-0577
(334) 347-0581 • (334) 393-8204 Fax
www.enterprisealabama.com

Eufaula/Barbour County CoC

333 E. Broad Street/P.O. Box 697
Eufaula, AL 36072
(334) 687-6664 • (334) 687-5240 Fax
(800) 524-7529 Toll Free
ebcchamber@bellsouth.net
www.eufaula-barbourchamber.com

Eutaw Area CoC

110 Main Street/P.O. Box 31
Eutaw, AL 35462
(205) 372-9002 • (205) 372-9974 Fax
www.greenecountyalabama.com

Evergreen/Concuh County Area CoC

100 Depot Square
Evergreen, AL 36401
(251) 578-1000

Fairfield CoC

P.O. Box 213
Fairfield, AL 35064

Fayette Area CoC

P.O. Box 247
Fayette, AL 35555
(205) 932-4587

Flomaton-Century CoC

P.O. Box 632
Flomaton, AL 36441
(251) 296-2431 City Hall
(251) 296-1930 Fax

Fort Deposit CoC

P.O. Box 162
Fort Deposit, AL 36032
(334) 227-4242 • (334) 227-4272 Fax

Fort Payne CoC

P.O. Box 680125
Fort Payne, AL 35968-0125
(256) 845-2741 • (256) 845-5849 Fax
www.fortpayne.com

Franklin County CoC

P.O. Box 44
Russellville, AL 35653
(256) 332-1760 • (256) 332-1740 Fax
www.franklincountychamber.org

Gadsden Area CoC

P.O. Box 185
Gadsden, AL 35902
(256) 543-3472
(800) 238-6924 Toll Free
(256) 543-9887 Fax
www.gadsdenchamber.com

Greater Gardendale CoC

945 Grubbs Avenue/P.O. Box 26
Gardendale, AL 35071
(205) 631-9195 • (205) 631-9034 Fax
gdalechamber@mindspring.com
www.gardendalechamberofcommerce.com

Gordo Area CoC

P.O. Box 33
Gordo, AL 35466
(205) 364-7870 (answering machine)
(205) 364-7383 Fax

Greater Geneva Area CoC

P.O. Box 477
Geneva, AL 36340
(334) 684-6582 • (334) 684-2943 Fax
geneva_chamber@entercomp.com
www.entercomp.com/users/geneva_chamber/

Greater Irondale CoC

1912 First Avenue S.
Irondale, AL 35210
(205) 956-3104 • (205) 956-5964 Fax
www.irondalechamber.org

Leeds Area CoC

8345 Thornton Avenue
Leeds, AL 35094-0900
(205) 699-5001 • (205) 699-5001 Fax
leedschamber@alltel.net
www.leedsalabama.com/chamber_of_commerce.htm

Greater Pell City CoC

1618 Cogswell Avenue, Suite 105
Pell City, AL 35125
(205) 338-3377 • (205) 338-1913 Fax
www.cityofpellycity.com

Greater Shelby County CoC

P.O. Box 324
Pelham, AL 35124-0324
(205) 663-4542 • (205) 663-4524 Fax
info@shelbychamber.org
www.shelbychamber.org

Greater Talladega Area CoC

P.O. Drawer A
Talladega, AL 35160
(256) 362-9075 • (256) 362-9093 Fax
sitemail@talladegachamber.com
www.talladegachamber.com

Greater Valley Area CoC

P.O. Box 205
Lanett, AL 36863
(334) 642-1411 • (334) 642-1410 Fax
www.greatervalleyarea.com

Greenville Area CoC

1 Depot Square
Greenville, AL 36037
(334) 382-3251 • (334) 382-3181 Fax

Grove Hill Area CoC

P.O. Box 567
Grove Hill, AL 36451
(251) 275-4188 • (251) 275-2278 Fax

Haleyville Area CoC

P.O. Box 634
Haleyville, AL 35565-1813
(205) 486-4611 • (205) 486-2984 Fax
www.haleychamber.org

Hamilton CoC

422 2nd Street/P.O. Box 1168
Hamilton, AL 35570-1168
(205) 921-7786 • (205) 921-2220 Fax

Hartselle Area CoC

110 Railroad Street S.W./P.O. Box 817
Hartselle, AL 35640
(256) 773-4370 • (256) 773-4379 Fax
hartsell@hiwaay.net
www.hartsellechamber.com

Headland CoC

P.O. Box 236
Headland, AL 36345-0236
(334) 693-3303
headlandchamber@centurytel.net

Homewood CoC

c/o Homewood Public Library
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Homewood, AL 35209
(205) 871-5631 • (205) 871-5632 Fax
www.homewoodchamber.org

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3659 Lorna Road, Suite 165
Hoover, AL 35216
(205) 988-5672 • (205) 988-8383 Fax
www.hooverchamber.org

Hueytown Area CoC

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(205) 491-8039 • (205) 491-7961 Fax
www.hueytown.org/chamber.htm

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Huntsville, AL 35804-0408
(256) 535-2000 • (256) 535-2015 Fax
hcc@hsvchamber.org
www.hsvchamber.org

Jackson County Area CoC
500 Commerce Street
Jackson, AL 36545
(251) 246-3251 • (251) 246-3213 Fax
jacksonchamber@earthlink.net

Lake Guntersville CoC
200 Gunter Avenue/P.O. Box 577
Guntersville, AL 35976
(256) 582-3612 • (256) 582-3682 Fax
gcc@lakeguntersville.org
www.lakeguntersville.org

Lawrence County CoC
P.O. Box 325
Moulton, AL 36560
(256) 974-1658 • (256) 974-2400 Fax
www.lawrenceal.com
lcc@hiwaay.net

Millbrook Area CoC
P.O. Box 353
Millbrook, AL 36054
(334) 285-0085 • (334) 285-9854 Fax
www.millbrookchamberofcommerce.com

Mobile Area CoC
P.O. Box 2187
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(251) 433-6951 • (251) 432-1129 Fax
www.mobilechamber.com

Monroeville Area CoC
P.O. Box 214
Monroeville, AL 36461
(251) 743-2879 • (251) 743-2189 Fax
www.monroecountyal.com

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720 Oak Street
Montevallo, AL 35115
(205) 665-1519
www.montevallocc.org

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P.O. Box 79
Montgomery, AL 36101
(334) 834-5200 • (334) 265-4745 Fax
www.montgomerychamber.com

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217 County Club Park/PMB 432
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(205) 871-3779 • (205) 871-6678 Fax
mtnbrookchamber@mindspring.com

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Bay Minette, AL 36507
(251) 937-5665 • (251) 937-5670 Fax
www.northbaldwinchamber.com

Opelika CoC
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Opelika, AL 36803-2366
(334) 745-4861 • (334) 749-4740 Fax
www.opelika.com

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Opp, AL 36467-0148
(334) 493-3070 • (334) 493-1060 Fax
www.oppchamber.com

Ozark Area CoC
294 Painter Avenue
Ozark, AL 36360
(334) 774-9321 or (800) 582-8497
(334) 774-8736 Fax
ozarkcc@snowhill.com

Perry County CoC
P.O. Box 95
Marion, AL 36756
(334) 683-9622
pinebelt.net/~pcchamber/index2.html

Phenix City/Russell County CoC
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(334) 298-3639 • (334) 298-3846 Fax
www.percchamber.com

Pike County CoC
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www.pikecountychamber.com

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Prattville, AL 36066
(334) 365-7392 • (334) 361-1314 Fax
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Rainsville CoC
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Rainsville, AL 35986
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www.rainsville-al.com

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www.saralandcoc.com

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Scottsboro, AL 35768
(256) 259-5500 • (256) 259-4447 Fax
www.sjcchamber.org

Selma-Dallas County CoC
912 Selma Avenue
Selma, AL 36701
(334) 875-7241 or (800) 45-SELMA
(334) 875-7142 Fax
www.selmaalabama.com

Shelby County CoC
Chamber Depot Ball Park Drive
P.O. Box 324
Pelham, AL 35124
(205) 663-4542 • (205) 663-4524 Fax
www.shelbychamber.org

Shoals CoC
P.O. Box 1331
Florence, AL 35631-1331
(256) 764-4661 • (256) 766-9017 Fax
www.shoalschamber.com

South Baldwin CoC
P.O. Box 1117
Foley, AL 36536
(251) 943-3291 • (251) 943-6810 Fax
chamber@southbaldwinchamber.com
www.southbaldwinchamber.com

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Millport, AL 35574
(205) 596-3378 • (205) 596-3787 Fax

South Shelby CoC
P.O. Box 396
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(205) 669-9075 • (205) 669-1842 Fax
sosshelby@bellsouth.net

Springville Area CoC
6496 U.S. Highway 11
Springville, AL 35146
(205) 467-2339
spvlib@alltel.net

Sylacauga CoC
P.O. Box 185
Sylacauga, AL 35150
(256) 249-0308 • (256) 249-0315 Fax
chamber@sylacauga.net
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Tallassee CoC
301-A King Street
Tallassee, AL 36078-1315
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Atlanta, GA 30328
Tad McCampbell
(770) 551-2785
(770) 551-2789 F

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(256) 351-0913
(256) 351-0914 F

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Birmingham, AL 35203
Jason McKnight, First Vice President
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(205) 226-8008 F

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(904) 491-7261 F

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Kevin Rafferty
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(205) 733-7111
(205) 733-7112 F

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(850) 650-3500
(850) 650-2468 F

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(205) 297-3346
(205) 297-7672 F

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Suite 500
Birmingham, AL 35242
Elise Dubas, Exec. Vice President
(205) 991-4227
(205) 443-0303 F

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Butch Tharp
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(334) 265-3359 F

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Lynn Haven, FL 32444
Larry A. Hardee, Bus. Dev. Officer
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(850) 265-1511 F

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Jay Roney
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(615) 744-6531 Fax

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(850) 683-1511 F

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Gary Fisher, Regional Manager
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(904) 727-7304 F

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Amy Carson
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(404) 828-3709 F

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Sam Renta
(205) 982-7900
(205) 982-7904 Fax

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Minneapolis, MN 55408
Tom Burke, Vice President
(612) 667-2753
(612) 316-2322 F

WHITNEY NATIONAL BANK

400 Labarre Road, 5th Floor
Jefferson, LA 70121
Wanda Bedoya, Asst. Vice Pres.
(504) 846-2576
(504) 846-2585 F

7(a) Guaranteed Lenders

This is a listing of top 25 7(a) lenders during FY 2006. This is not a listing of lenders with guarantee agreements with SBA.

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Business Loan Center, LLC
Compass Bank
Redstone FCU
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Capital One, Federal Savings
Bank
Regions Bank
Wachovia SBA Lending, Inc.
United Central Bank
Banco Popular North America
Newtek Small Business Finance, Inc.
CIT Small Business Lending Corporation
The First National Bank of Taladega
Hancock Bank
Trustmark National Bank
North Jackson Bank, Inc.
Wachovia Bank, National Association
Banktrust
Premier Bank of the South
Small Business Loan Source, LLC
First Tuskegee Bank
Reliance Bank
Irwin Franchise Capital Corporation
West Alabama Bank & Trust
Community West Bank, National Association

Active Out Of State Lenders

COMERICA BANK (P)
Houston, TX
(713) 888-2670

BANK OF THE WEST (P)
Fresno, CA
(423) 267-1610

BUSINESS LOAN CENTER, INC. (P)
Richmond, VA
(804) 355-4449

SYNOVUS SBA LENDING (P)
Columbus, GA
(770) 465-9595

COMMERCIAL CREDIT CORPORATION
New York, NY
(212) 856-4475

GOLETA NATIONAL BANK (P)
Goleta, CA
(888) 462-4884

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